

The New Testament and Early Christian Literature in Greco-Roman Context

Studies in Honor of
David E. Aune

Edited by
John Fotopoulos

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LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

LOVEDAY ALEXANDER, Professor of Biblical Studies, University of Sheffield, U.K.

DAVID L. BALCH, Professor of New Testament, Texas Christian University, Brite Divinity School, U.S.A.

PEDER BORGEN, Emeritus Professor of New Testament, University of Trondheim, Norway

JAMES H. CHARLESWORTH, George L. Collord Professor of New Testament Language and Literature, Princeton Theological Seminary, U.S.A.

DENNIS C. DULING, Professor of Religious Studies, Canisius College, U.S.A.

JOHN T. FITZGERALD, Associate Professor of Religious Studies, University of Miami, U.S.A.

JOHN FOTOPOULOS, Assistant Professor of Religious Studies, Saint Mary's College, Notre Dame, U.S.A.

JÖRG FREY, Professor of New Testament Theology, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität Munich, Germany

ROBERT M. GRANT, Emeritus Professor of New Testament and Early Christian Literature, The University of Chicago, U.S.A.

PAUL HARTOG, Adjunct Associate Professor of New Testament Studies and Greek, Faith Baptist Theological Seminary, U.S.A.

JAN WILLEM VAN HENTEN, Professor of Early Judaism and New Testament, Universiteit van Amsterdam, The Netherlands

REIDAR HVALVIK, Professor of New Testament, MF Norwegian School of Theology, Norway

JAMES A. KELHOFFER, Assistant Professor of Theological Studies, St. Louis University, U.S.A.

HANS KVALBEIN, Professor of New Testament, MF Norwegian School of Theology, Norway

TROY W. MARTIN, Professor of Religious Studies, St. Xavier University, U.S.A.

MARGARET M. MITCHELL, Professor of New Testament and Early Christian Literature, The University of Chicago, U.S.A.

DAVID P. MOESSNER, Professor of Biblical Theology, University of Dubuque Theological Seminary, U.S.A.

CALVIN J. ROETZEL, Arnold Lowe Professor of Religious Studies, Macalester College, U.S.A.

TORREY SELAND, Professor of New Testament Studies, School of Mission and Theology, Norway

THOMAS H. TOBIN, S.J., Professor of Theology, Loyola University Chicago, U.S.A.

URBAN C. VON WAHLDE, Professor of Theology, Loyola University Chicago, U.S.A.

ENCOMIUM TO DAVID E. AUNE

John Fotopoulos

I am very grateful to have the opportunity to join with so many distinguished colleagues in celebrating the life and work of a gifted scholar, teacher, mentor, and dear friend—David E. Aune. The present collection of scholarly studies written in honor of Prof. Aune on the occasion of his sixty-fifth birthday entitled *The New Testament and Early Christian Literature in Greco-Roman Context: Studies in Honor of David E. Aune* is meant to reflect David's academic training, long-term interests, and extensive publications. It is "Greco-Roman Context" in the title of this work which connects David's various publications within the discipline of New Testament studies and early Christian literature. His encyclopedic knowledge of early Christian, Jewish, Greek, and Roman literature has enabled him to advance groundbreaking interpretations of various ancient writings—interpretations that have significantly influenced the direction of contemporary New Testament scholarship. Professor Aune's pioneering academic work has proven him to be one of the leading scholars of his discipline, having published more than one hundred articles appearing in scholarly books, reference works, and journals, while also having authored or edited fifteen books. The topics in these publications, to name only a few, have ranged from prophecy, eschatology, apocalypticism, magic, symposia, biography, Greek, Gospels, Pauline studies, the Revelation to John, and the New Testament and early Christian literature in their literary and rhetorical environment.

David's first book was published by E. J. Brill in 1972 and appeared in the Supplements to *Novum Testamentum* (volume 28), entitled *The Cultic Setting of Realized Eschatology in Early Christianity*. This book is a revised version of Prof. Aune's Ph.D. dissertation at The University of Chicago. It seems especially appropriate that the present *Festschrift* in honor of David E. Aune is published by his first publisher in the same prestigious series in which his first book appeared. David has also published several other especially notable books which should be mentioned here: the influential *Prophecy in Early Christianity and the*

Ancient Mediterranean World (Eerdmans, 1983), translated into Italian as *La Profezia nel Primo Cristianesimo e il Mondo Mediterraneo Antico* (Paideia Editrice, 1996); the groundbreaking *The New Testament in Its Literary Environment* (Westminster, 1987), translated into Spanish as *El Nuevo Testamento en su entorno literario* (Desclee de Brouwer, 1983); the magisterial three-volume commentary on the Revelation of John (Word Books and Thomas Nelson, 1997–98); and most recently, *The Westminster Dictionary of New Testament and Early Christian Literature and Rhetoric* (Westminster John Knox, 2003), considered by leading scholars to be an astonishing achievement and immeasurable contribution to the study of the New Testament and early Christian literature.

Although Professor Aune is widely known for his groundbreaking scholarship appearing in numerous innovative publications, he is also an exceptional teacher who is enthusiastically dedicated to his students. David spends the majority of each academic year preparing for and teaching courses at the undergraduate, masters, and doctoral levels. Despite David's numerous publications, one can only wonder how much *more* he would be publishing if he did not spend so much time devoted to his students and the classroom. His courses encourage students to grapple with ancient writings in an environment that is comfortable, yet quite challenging. David does not tell students what a given text means (although frequently his students wish that he would!) so that students will be able to memorize his interpretation. Rather, he challenges students to think critically about ancient texts as they consider important literary conventions, as well as the historical, social, cultural, and religious contexts into which these texts fit. Prof. Aune's strong emphasis on a mastery of ancient Greek for his doctoral students creates a commotion among them every semester as they grapple with his lengthy Greek assignments. These assignments are due three times per week, requiring textual critical analyses, literal translations, idiomatic English translations, and diachronic and synchronic analyses of various ancient Greek writings. It does not take long for these students to realize that they are studying with a renowned scholar and tremendously erudite educator who will challenge them to reach new academic and personal heights. Yet despite his immense knowledge, David is eminently approachable and extremely modest. He is witty, humorous, supportive, respectful, caring and kind, always finding ways to build students up, rather than knocking them down. He regularly invites entire classes of students to his home for dinner parties at which he

and his wife, Mary Lou, serve home-cooked meals and share time with students in jovial conversation. Certainly David's students are made to feel as though they are more than just pupils enrolled in a course, but as though they are part of David's family.

David E. Aune was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota on November 8, 1939, the son of Edward Marius Aune and Anna Belle Skar Aune, and he is of Norwegian descent. Professor Aune attended Wheaton College (Wheaton, Illinois), where he earned a B.A. in Greek in 1961 and an M.A. in New Testament Language and Literature in 1963. Returning to Minneapolis in 1963, he worked as a computer operator to help support his family when his father was unable to work because of a terminal illness. During that period he attended the University of Minnesota, earning an M.A. in Classical Studies in 1965. During that same year he married Mary Louise Lundberg, originally from Solway, Minnesota. David and Mary Lou have been blessed with four children, Karl Erik (1969), Kristofer (1970), Kurt (1972) and Karen (1974), as well as with three young grandchildren. Following David's marriage to Mary Lou in 1965, the couple moved to Chicago where he earned a Ph.D. in New Testament & Early Christian Literature at The University of Chicago in 1970 under the direction of Prof. Robert M. Grant. His first academic appointment was at Saint Xavier College (now Saint Xavier University) in Chicago from 1968 to 1990, beginning as Assistant Professor (1968–72), then Associate Professor (1972–75), then Professor (1975–1990). During his tenure at Saint Xavier College, David was a Fulbright visiting professor at the University of Trondheim (Norway) in 1982–83. He then moved to Loyola University Chicago, where he held the position of Professor of New Testament from 1990–1999, during which time he was Director of Graduate Programs in Theology from 1991–1994. While at Loyola he was a recipient of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation *Forschungspreis* for a year of research at the University of Tübingen (Germany) in 1994–95. In 1999 he accepted the position of Professor of New Testament & Christian Origins at the University of Notre Dame (Notre Dame, Indiana). In 2001 he was elected a member of the Norwegian Royal Academy of Arts and Sciences (Det kongelige norske videnskabers selskab). Subsequently he was the Annual Professor at the Albright Institute for Archaeological Research in Jerusalem (2002–3) and was simultaneously awarded a fellowship from the American Council of Learned Societies. David and Mary Lou presently reside in Nilus, Michigan

(just north of Notre Dame) and are members of a local ELCA Lutheran church.

David is an active member of several professional societies, including the American Philological Association, the Chicago Society of Biblical Research (of which he was president in 1984–85), the Society of Biblical Literature (he was president of the Midwest Region of the SBL from 2000–2002), and the Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas (SNTS).

The contributors to the present *Festschrift* are some of David's dearest colleague-friends and were invited by the editor to contribute to the volume. I feel especially privileged to be able to honor my *Doktorvater* by spearheading the present work. The contributors to the volume are distinguished scholars from the United States and Europe, and they reflect the international friendships that David has made throughout his career as a scholar and active member of the SNTS. Several of the European contributors are from Norway and honor their Norwegian-American colleague, David E. Aune, with their contributions to this volume. There were several other scholars that wanted to honor David by contributing to the volume but were unable to do so because of illness or other scholarly commitments. To those other scholars not invited to contribute to the *Festschrift* that would have liked to do so, I ask your forgiveness.

The present studies are original works that are being published here for the first time and which contribute to the on-going study of the New Testament and early Christian literature in Greco-Roman context, thus honoring the particular academic interests and achievements of Prof. Aune. The terms "Greco-Roman Context" within the book's title have allowed the contributors to offer insights or to shed light upon the interpretation of passages, themes, genres, forms, styles, grammar, or lexicography in the New Testament and early Christian literature through the use of sources from Hellenistic and Roman culture, as well as from Hellenistic Judaism. Several of the contributions intentionally revisit or build upon some of David's past work, such as the studies offered by Profs. Balch, Frey, Mitchell, and Seland. The studies in the present book have been arranged by topic into five parts: (a) Pauline Studies (7 studies); (b) Gospels/Acts (5 studies); (c) Revelation to John (4 studies); (d) Hellenistic Judaism (1 study) and (e) Early Christian Literature (4 studies). The present studies investigate a range of topics with insights from various Greco-Roman sources such as literature, rhetoric, magic, medicine, moral philoso-

phy, art, iconography, archaeology, religious cults, and social conventions. These studies also utilize social-historical, social-scientific, literary-critical, and rhetorical-critical methodologies, thus adding an interdisciplinary dimension to the volume. Abbreviations within the studies are those of the *SBL Handbook of Style: For Ancient Near Eastern, Biblical, and Early Christian Studies* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1999).

To Prof. David E. Aune—gifted scholar, teacher, mentor, and dear friend—many years of good health, happiness, and fruitful work!

PART ONE

PAULINE STUDIES

IOUDAIOS AND PAUL

Calvin J. Roetzel

In a divisive national atmosphere that is increasingly xenophobic, I am moved to deal with one, but only one, aspect of this destructive impulse. In such a context, I am led far into the past to the letters of Paul the apostle, documents that shaped the attitudes of emergent Christianity to the present day. Laboring in the belief that the best antidote to social poison is study and careful analysis, I offer this rather limited, narrow analysis on a simple translation issue, namely the translation of the term *Ioudaios* that is almost always rendered “Jew” in the New Testament. This study is in no sense final or definitive, but a proposal for reflection and discussion.¹

1. *Recent Scholarship on Paul and his Native Religious Tradition*

Although the relationship of Paul to his native religious tradition has long been a focus of my work, this particular study was sparked by two essays by Daniel Boyarin: (1) his “Moses’ Veil; or, The Jewish Letter, the Christian Spirit,”² a study Paul’s hermeneutic, and (2) his essay on the Gospel of John found strangely but wonderfully in a volume devoted to conversations with the apostle Paul. See especially his venture: “The IOUDAIOS in John and the Prehistory of ‘Judaism.’”³

¹ I am honored to share in this effort to recognize and pay tribute to David E. Aune, an eminent scholar, and distinguished co-founder, and president of the VGBNT—Der Verein für die geistlichen behinderten Neuen Testamentler.

² Daniel Boyarin, *A Radical Jew, Paul and the Politics of Identity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 86–105.

³ Daniel Boyarin’s study, “The IOUDAIOS in John and the Prehistory of ‘Judaism,’” can be found in *Pauline Conversations in Context: Essays in Honor of Calvin J. Roetzel* (ed. Janice Capel Anderson, Philip Sellew and Claudia Setzer; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 216–239.

Boyarin's earlier study of 2 Cor 3 anticipates the conclusion of his second highly suggestive essay, namely that it is anachronistic to view Paul as the founder of "Christianity," a rival religion distinct and separate from and juxtaposed against Judaism. Paul's claim that the ministry of the "spirit" revealed in the "new" covenant (2 Cor 3:6, 14) replaces the ministry carved in stone ("the old covenant") Boyarin calls supercessionist.⁴ Nonetheless, he adds that Paul's claim that "the literal Israel, literal history, literal circumcision, and literal genealogy are superseded by their allegorical, spiritual signifieds is *not* necessarily anti-Semitic or anti-Judaic."⁵ In his explication of his point Boyarin recognizes the intramural nature of this textual dispute: "From the perspective of the first century, the contest between a Pauline allegorical Israel and a rabbinic hermeneutics of the concrete Israel is simply a *legitimate, hermeneutical, and political contestation*. *The denotation of 'Israel' was to a certain extent up for grabs*" (my emphasis).⁶ Obviously Boyarin thinks Paul is speaking of a bitter argument within the Jewish community and is involved in a contest over the future direction of Judaism.

Boyarin's construction of this dispute as an intramural and context based one offers a corrective to the recent study of Margaret Thrall. The application of his insight, however, should in no sense be limited in its relevance to Margaret Thrall's work. His work does, however, show how the context is hugely important in attempting to decipher this difficult passage. While this observation may sound like a truism, I am struck by how often it is more honored in theory than in practice. To cite only one recent example, in her monumental commentary on 2 Corinthians, Margaret Thrall rejects any attempt to view Paul's opponents in 2 Cor 3:7–11 as ecstasies claiming their faces, like that of Moses, radiated with a divine evanescence who deemed the absence of this reflected glory in Paul's face a sign of his deficiency.⁷ Thrall comments quite directly:

the natural way [*sic*] of reading 3.7–11 is to see it as a comparison and contrast between *non-Christian Judaism and Christianity* [*sic*] (both Jewish and Gentile). The idea that it is two differing forms of the

⁴ Boyarin, *Radical Jew*, 104.

⁵ Boyarin, *Radical Jew*, 105.

⁶ Boyarin, *Radical Jew*, 105.

⁷ Margaret E. Thrall, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians* (ICC; 2 vols.; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1994), 1:248.

Christian mission that are opposed to each other is read into the text, not out of it. If Paul is reacting to criticism, it must come originally from non-Christian Jews who have compared him to disadvantage with the glorious figure of Moses. . . .⁸

By superimposing “Christianity” onto this intramural discussion, Thrall is evidently unaware that she herself is herself reading an anachronism “into the text.” Such slips have a significance that reaches far beyond their immediate application, for they impose a post-facto view of Paul’s letters onto the text itself, a view that conceals the intramural nature of the disputes here and elsewhere.⁹

I turn now specifically to a later study of Boyarin, namely his seminal essay on the *Ioudaioi* in the Fourth Gospel that may have significance for interpreting Paul in a way that has been heretofore unexplored. His essay draws on two richly suggestive studies by Shemaryahu Talmon and Seth Schwartz¹⁰ that have pointed relevance for this study. In offering his critique of Max Weber’s *Das antike Judentum*, Talmon agrees that in the catastrophic events of the deportation—the loss of homeland, temple, and autonomy—the deportees of Judah moved from a sense of peoplehood to an awareness of being a “confessional community.”¹¹ Talmon, however, differs markedly with Weber on the self-understanding of the community in the post-exilic period). During the Exile an in-group/out-group mentality developed that was crucial for the maintenance of the preservation of a people’s identity. There in the ghettos in Tel-abib (Ezra 1:3; 3:15) and Casiphah (Ezra 8:15–20) this construction enabled the deportees to preserve their identity with “ways and manners that were not shared” by the majority of their people whom the Babylonian conquerors left behind in the province of Judah (*Yahud*).¹² This construction would endure to have enormous significance someday for the returning exiles.

After the Exile, the returning deportees sought to impose those “ways and manners” on the province of Judah, and viewed themselves as

⁸ Thrall, *Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 1:248.

⁹ See also works by J. D. H. Dunn, Ed Sanders, and N. T. Wright.

¹⁰ S. Talmon, “The Emergence of Jewish Sectarianism in the Early Second Temple Period,” in *Ancient Israelite Religion, Essays in Honor of Frank Moore Cross* (ed. Patrick D. Miller, Jr., Paul D. Hanson, S. Dean McBride; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 583–616. Seth Schwartz, *Imperialism and Jewish Society, 200 B.C.E.–640 C.E.* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).

¹¹ Talmon, “Jewish Sectarianism,” 587–90.

¹² Talmon, “Jewish Sectarianism,” 595.

the guardians of a "state" entity that was also a confessional community. They resettled Jerusalem and assumed control of the religious *and* civic administration of the area. They retained the rules used in the Exile to develop and maintain an identity separate from that of the alien. Now they imposed those same "ways and manners" to separate themselves from the Israelites and the Am Ha'aretz left behind. The endogamy principle that forbade intermarriage with the ethnic foreigners in Babylon was invoked to forbid intermarriage with the "am ha'aretz," with indigent Israelites, the Samaritans, and the "other." *Connubium* was to be restricted to the descendents of the former exiles.¹³ Only the returnees were to be seen and understood as the "righteous remnant" or "holy seed."¹⁴

What was deemed a temporary *modus operandi* in Babylonia was thus sacralized as a permanent feature of life in the homeland. In Talmon's view that so profoundly informed Boyarin's essay, the "need for a close circumscription of Jewish identity that had been especially pressing in the setting of a surrounding pagan foreign majority in Babylonia-Persia was now turned inward."¹⁵ Consequently, the groundwork was laid for the development of a geo-political, religious temple state that defined the terms of inclusion and exclusion and constructed a mythical three-tiered world that was narrowly restrictive. At the center were the *Yehudim* (*Ioudaioi*), or what Talmon calls a "creedal-national"¹⁶ inner group; outside this core there was a broadly "national" inner group (e.g. Israelities, Am Ha'Aretz, Samaritans, Edomites, etc.) who were excluded from the *inner sanctum* of power and who were viewed and treated as second class citizens. Beyond these two circles were the creedal ethnic foreigners or outsiders.

Drawing on Talmon's study, Boyarin argues that the term *Yehudim* (*Ioudaioi*) should not be translated "Jews" in the generic sense, but should be reserved to refer to the "inhabitants of Judea" in the earlier period with a semantically religious overtone, and in the post-exilic period the term should be reserved to refer to "citizens of the Temple-State founded by the returnees from Exile." The term *Yehudim* (*Ioudaioi*) thus became a signifier of a subset of the broader term "Israelites" or people of the land.¹⁷

¹³ Talmon, "Jewish Sectarianism," 599.

¹⁴ Talmon, "Jewish Sectarianism," 599.

¹⁵ Talmon, "Jewish Sectarianism," 600.

¹⁶ Talmon, "Jewish Sectarianism," 599.

¹⁷ Boyarin, "The Prehistory of Judaism," 221, n. 19.

Boyarin has also noted the relevance of Seth Schwartz's seminal study of the expansion of the Hasmonean hegemony after the Maccabean Revolt. In 130 B.C.E. the Hasmonean rule was narrowly confined to Judea itself, but the situation changed dramatically within a generation. At its peak in 100 B.C.E. the Hasmonean hegemony extended over a vast territory from upper Galilee to the Negev in the south and from just east of the Jordan rift to the coastal plain in the west. Later of course even the boundaries of the hegemony would expand to include the coastal plain. This domain, exceeded only by the extent of the kingdom of David, expanded the reach of the Temple state considerably, and sparked resentments as well.¹⁸ Furthermore, under the Hasmoneans the motley collection of people within these boundaries—Edomites (or Idumeans), Samaritans and Galilean Arabs, Greeks and Syrians of remote Israelite descent—Schwartz holds—“*all became in some sense Jewish* (my emphasis).”¹⁹

While agreeing with much of Schwartz's thesis, Boyarin unpacks the phrase “in some sense Jewish” in a quite insightful way. He insists that this “mixed multitude” was and remained marginalized and “although recognized as *Israel*, there were not *Yehudim*, nor it follows, *Ioudaioi*.”²⁰ Whereas Schwartz uses the word *Yehudim*, or *Ioudaioi* to signify the entire mixed multitude incorporated voluntarily or forcibly into the Hasmonean kingdom, Boyarin gives the term *Yehudim* a much more restricted nuance. Under the Hasmoneans, the Ioudaioi or Yehudim from the south moved into the “occupied” regions and imposed the same “ways and means” of identity construction and world maintenance of the exilic and post-exilic period.

Texts from the *peshtarim* of Qumran lend substance to Boyarin's adjustment of Schwartz's view. The “sect” reserves the title the true “*Yehuda*” for the community itself while assigning second class status to the peoples of Ephraim and Manashe, signifiers for the Pharisees and Sadducees.²¹ The signifiers apparently gained their currency from established use among the Judaeans. Similarly, the Delos inscription that refers to the Samaritans who make offerings on Mt. Gerizim as

¹⁸ Schwartz, *Imperialism and Jewish Society*, 36.

¹⁹ Schwartz, *Imperialism and Jewish Society*, 36.

²⁰ Boyarin, “The Prehistory of Judaism,” 228.

²¹ Boyarin, “The Prehistory of Judaism,” 230 and n. 45 calling attention to the work of D. Flusser, “Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes in *Pesher Nahum*, in *Essays in Jewish History and Philology in Memory of Gedaliahu Alon* (ed. M. Dorman, S. Safrai and M. Stern; Tel Aviv: Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 1970), 133–168.

“Israelites,” not *Ioudaioi* lends further support for Boyarin’s hypothesis.²²

While Boyarin’s thesis is compelling, it raises questions. For example, Schwartz has proven that the Hasmonean dynasty, though centered in Jerusalem and devoted to the Temple, only with great difficulty was able to claim ties to the Zadokite priesthood or the Davidic royal line.²³ Nevertheless, the Judean traditionalists supported the Maccabean movement for they were evidently satisfied that the Hasmoneans “upheld the Torah’s validity as the constitution of Judaea.”²⁴ The imposition of this constitution on annexed areas was by force and often brought resentments that would surface later. When John Hyrcanus annexed Idumaea (Edom) south of Judaea he demanded that the Idumaeans “adopt the customs and laws of the Judaeans or leave their country. He also campaigned against the Samaritans, occupied Shechem, their capital city, destroyed their temple on Mount Gerizim, and expected them to profess loyalty to the Temple in Jerusalem.”²⁵

Later when John’s son Aristobulus conquered Galilee the inhabitants were either forced or strongly encouraged to confess their loyalty to Judaism. So, in spite of the question raised, in this setting Boyarin’s thesis would best explain the marginal character of this population and how at best they were treated like second-class citizens. If Boyarin’s thesis is credible, then it might prove useful to examine the terms *Ioudaioi* and *Ioudaismos* in Paul’s letters, to ponder the difficulties, and to locate the possibilities.

2. *Paul and the Ioudaioi*

Paul uses the term *Ioudaios* or *Ioudaioi* twenty-three times in the undisputed letters (not counting 1 Thess 2:14)²⁶ and the term *Ioudaismos* two times in Galatians (1:13, 14). In two of the undisputed letters Paul explicitly claims to be from *Ioudaismos* (three times), but as we shall see, special circumstances surround those references. Let us turn to them now.

²² Boyarin, “The Prehistory of Judaism,” 231.

²³ Schwartz, *Imperialism and Jewish Society*, 33–34.

²⁴ Schwartz, *Imperialism and Jewish Society*, 34.

²⁵ Schwartz, *Imperialism and Jewish Society*, 37.

²⁶ I still am persuaded by the essay of Birger Pearson which asserts this reference was redactional, inserted after the fall of the Temple in 70 C.E.

Two passages merit our attention: Gal 2:15 and 1 Cor 9:20–23. In Gal 2:1–21 Paul tells two stories—one set in Jerusalem and the other in Antioch. Both are designed to support his argument for a Gentile inclusive gospel. In 2:1–10, Paul recalls an ugly incident in Jerusalem between Barnabas, Titus and himself with Peter, James and John and “false brothers” who were secretly brought in “to spy out our freedom . . . that they might bring us into bondage” (RSV, 2:4). Paul caustically refers to these antagonists as those “*reputed to be pillars*” (RSV, 2:9) whom he sarcastically dismisses: “what they are makes no difference to me” (RSV, 2:6). Even the agreement that Paul recalls in 2:9–10 imposes no conditions other than those Paul and his cohort gladly accept, and leaves unchallenged Paul’s claim of independence. Paul’s version of the incident at least implies that the debate was about authority.

On the heels of this story comes another in which Paul recalls an angry confrontation with Peter, members of the “circumcision party,” and/or “some men of James” in Antioch (Gal 2:11–21). Paul’s gospel announced that Christ’s death and resurrection inaugurated the final apocalyptic scenario in which Gentile sinners could join God’s elect without reference to the law as a means of salvation, and that message obviously alarmed some of the *Ioudaioi* in the Jerusalem church. Thus Paul became a sinner by bringing in sinners without recourse to law, and by claiming Messiah Jesus as an instrument of this inclusion of the “other” in the elect indirectly made Christ an instrument of sin (2:17).

In Paul’s version of the nose to nose exchange with Peter he poses a rhetorical question for Peter: “If you, a *Ioudaios*, live like a Gentile and not like a *Ioudaikos*, how can you can you force Gentiles to live like *Ioudaioi*?” In 2:15 Paul begins anew. In one of the rare instances he directly and specifically appeals to his own status as an *Ioudaios*. He faces his critics with an inclusive phrase: “We (*hemeis*) who are *Ioudaioi* by birth and not Gentile sinners, but know that a human being is not right wised [with God] by works of the law but through the faithfulness of Christ Jesus, and even we have trusted in Christ Jesus, in order that we might be right wised by the faithfulness of Christ and not by works of the law . . .”

Importantly, Paul begins his argument by taking his place in the company of the *Ioudaioi* as an *Ioudaios*. Martyn quite correctly notes that Paul uses the emphatic and inclusive “we” to connect with the addressees in a friendly way: “We—all of us—belonging to the same

group, differentiated from those others.”²⁷ Martyn also notes that immediately thereafter, Paul’s delineation of his gospel clashes with that of his fellow Judaeans (2:16): “that a person is not right wised by works of law but through the faithfulness of Christ because by works of the law is no flesh (person) right wised.” What is important for our discussion is the way Paul here lays claim to his status as a *Ioudaios* because the context manifestly requires it, but please note how he immediately thereafter begins to redefine the term, to push the margins, and to subvert the exclusive claims of the *Ioudaioi* of the Jerusalem church. He argues for the inclusion of Gentiles in God’s elect through “the faithfulness of Jesus Christ” (Gal 2:16) and not by “works of the law,” and that argument revalues his own *Ioudaismos* and that of his adversaries from Jerusalem.

Two times in this letter and only in this letter Paul recalls his native religion—his “*Ioudaismos*”—and remorsefully recounts his persecution of the “church of God”: “You have heard of my former manner of life in *Ioudaismos*, how excessively I persecuted the church of God, and how I tried to make havoc of it, how I progressed in *Ioudaismos* beyond many of my age among my own people, being so extremely zealous for the traditions of my fathers.” Please note that “my former manner of life in *Ioudaismos*” hardly means that Paul is no longer a *Ioudaios*. It refers only to his “manner of life” now revalued in Messiah Jesus. But, his immediate description of an apostolic call reminiscent of that of Jeremiah (1:4), his independence of the Jerusalem circle (1:17) and his denial of any need to consult with “flesh and blood” (1:16) relativized the “progress” in and “zeal” for the traditions of the “fathers” and set him on his mission to the Gentiles. Now, the terms of that inclusion were in dispute. Which version of the gospel would survive? At this point that was hardly clear. Note also the parallel in Jer 1:4–5 to Paul’s own experience. Like Jeremiah, Paul felt “set aside from his mother’s womb” [Jer 1:4; Gal 1:15]. Like Jeremiah, he lived a celibate life without the comfort of family and children. Like Jeremiah, his life as a messenger was set in a period of crisis—apocalyptic and historical. Like Jeremiah, he was a messenger to the *goyim* or *ethne* [Jer 1:5; Gal 1:16], and like Jeremiah, he protested his lack of rhetorical skill [Jer 1:6; 2 Cor 10:10].

²⁷ J. Louis Martyn, *Galatians, a New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB; New York: Doubleday, 1997), 248.

Elsewhere, in 1 Cor 9:19–23, Paul speaks autobiographically of his missionary strategy that aims to unify, not divide: “I became to the *Ioudaiois* as (*hos*) a *Ioudaios*, in order to win *Ioudaious*, to those under the law, as one under the law, though I myself not being under the law, in order to win those under the law. . . . I have become all things to all people in order that by all means I might save some. I do all things for the sake of the gospel in order that I might be a joint participant of it.” Here the word *Ioudaios* hardly carries the pregnant meaning of the Galatians reference. But here the word sets one pole of a polarity of difference that Paul hopes to reconcile. Especially in Corinth, in a factious church, Paul’s pairing of the word with its opposite, “those outside the law” (i.e. Gentiles, 1 Cor 9:21) and his identification with members of both groups hardly sounds like political toadyism or that Paul was encouraging his addressees to become political and religious chameleons. Rather he was presenting himself, some might say falsely, as a uniter who identified with no specific party or faction. Against Marshall who argues that Paul is here responding to the charge of being servile,²⁸ I go with Mitchell who argues that Paul here is arguing for compromise in the face of Corinthian factionalism that threatens the future of the church. Such compromise for the welfare of the church, Paul claims, is no sign of weakness but is part and partial of the believer’s calling.²⁹ That Paul could behave like a *Ioudaios* should surprise no one, for that was his ancestry. What is startling in this passage is not that he would claim his Judean heritage, but that he could become like one outside the law, i.e. “other,” or “pagan” (*anomos*, 1 Cor 9:21) to gain those outside the law, a negation of that heritage. Here again, the most fitting word to emphasize that contrast was *Ioudaios* as defined above and is, as I have noted, context sensitive.

While these passages show Paul’s explicit claim to his lineage as *Ioudaios*, they refract in multiple and surprising ways. They can stand as the polar opposite of Gentile “sinners” (Gal 2:15), as a signifier of the priority the *Ioudaioi* enjoy in salvation history (Rom 1:16; 2:9, 10), and as a genealogical marker (Gal 1:15). Paul’s Christology

²⁸ P. Marshall, *Enmity in Corinth: Social Conventions in Paul’s Relations with the Corinthians* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1987), 309–317.

²⁹ Margaret M. Mitchell, *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation: An Exegetical Investigation of the Language and Composition of 1 Corinthians* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1991), 133, n. 410.

bestows on this pluri-significant word the possibility of expansion to embrace “pagans” defined as other by the “ways and means,” of the *Ioudaioi*. Moreover, once spiritualized, the symbol can radically revise or even subvert the more limited meaning of the word (Rom 2:28, 29). Nothing, however, in Paul’s appropriation of the word in its root sense as here understood goes against the definition crafted by Talmon, Schwartz, and Boyarin. Even when Paul subverts the mythology concealed in the word, he affirms its definitional role in the Exilic and Post-exilic period.

Paul would not have needed to be from Judea to claim his status as a *Ioudaios*. The Hasmonean expansion invited the out-migration of *Ioudaioi* to other locations under their hegemony, and a further migration to a city like Tarsus is understandable.³⁰

Once these references in Galatians and 1 Corinthians are taken out of the mix the remainder of references to the *Ioudaioi* deal with other concerns. A number specifically reveal Paul’s angle of vision. They deal with the chronological priority of the *Ioudaioi* in the great salvation story (Rom 1:16; 2:9, 10; 3:1, 9, 29; 10:12; 1 Cor 1:24). Others specifically address his kin, e.g. “you who . . .” (Rom 2:17; 2:28; 2:29), or speak about his kin (Rom 9:24) who seek a sign (1 Cor 1:22), or are offended by the suggestion that the Messiah would die as a felon (1:23). Others refer to those who five times inflict on him forty lashes less one (2 Cor 11:24). While these nuances are varied, they all are entirely consistent with Boyarin’s thesis. What is very clear is that the identity that Paul claims, and that provides his location for his angle of vision is that of the *Ioudaioi*. That would explain Paul’s ambivalence about the term, but it also introduces a topic much in need of further exploration—Paul’s view of Torah, his conviction about what is moral, the insider language that is quite evident in statements like “you who” or “now I am speaking to those who know the law,” and his understanding of salvation history. This might offer some light on his persecution of the church and his own persecution by the *Ioudaioi*. What this list leaves unexplained is Paul’s embrace of the marginalized, his inclusion of “Gentile sinners” among

³⁰ A fourth century tradition by Jerome deemed by many scholars to be worthless, nevertheless, may contain a grain of truth. It suggests that Paul’s parents were relocated from Galilee to Tarsus by one of the Roman invaders (possibly Pompey). While that would account for the relocation, it would not lend substance to Luke’s claim of Roman citizenship for Paul.

God's elect, his Gentile mission, or another signifier he uses to describe himself, namely the broader and more inclusive term *Israelites*.

3. *Paul as an Israelite*

While Paul claims to have been a *Ioudaios*, (Gal 1:13) and shared a bond with his adversaries as *Ioudaioi* (Peter, those of James, et al.) he, nevertheless, took vigorous exception to their attempt to impose the rules and manners of the *Ioudaioi* on the Gentile converts as a condition of inclusion in the people of Israel (Gal 2:5). While Paul insisted that his apocalyptic gospel opened the way for the inclusion of the excluded, his antagonists charged that the inclusion of the outsider, the other, the Gentile, implied that God had rejected Israel as the elect. In Romans 9–11 Paul responded to that charge. For if God reneged on promises to Israel, then fundamental questions about God's dependability arose. Let us listen to Paul's own words in Romans 11:1: "I ask, therefore, has God rejected his people? No, no, absolutely not. For as for me, I myself *am* an *Israelite* (*kai gar ego Israelites eimi*), of the seed of Abraham, and the tribe of Benjamin" (my emphasis). Here I agree with Dunn that the use of the term Israelites is deliberate and that Paul specifically does not say, "I myself am a *Ioudaios* (*ego Ioudaios eimi*)."³¹ The emphatic, "as for me, I myself am an Israelite" receives further emphasis with the phrases "of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin." If I understand him properly, I cannot go with Dunn, however, that Paul is here "redefining the people of God." Rather, he is voicing a belief that the apocalyptic moment inaugurated by Christ redefined the terms of inclusion.³² Dunn is correct, I think, that here Paul speaks as an insider "as one who sees the promise to *all* seed,"³³ and that there is real tension between the promise of 11:1 and the exclusionary message of 9:7 ("Not all are children of Abraham because they are his seed"). The contrast here, however, is hardly between "Christian" and "Israelite" for the introduction of the term "Christian" already presupposes a different kind of contrast. But Dunn is correct that there

³¹ J. D. G. Dunn, *Romans* (2 vols.; WBC 38A–B; Dallas: Word Books, 1988), 2:635.

³² Dunn, *Romans*, 2:635.

³³ Dunn, *Romans*, 2:635.

is tension between 10:1 and 9:7. I would add that there is an implied challenge in 11:1 to those who arrogate to themselves the power to assign location. Moreover, Dunn correctly rejects the usual understanding of 11:1 to mean, “of course, God has not rejected his people because he has not rejected me.” Such, a reading trivializes the scope of Paul’s grand vision.³⁴ I would move beyond Dunn, however, who in the final analysis seems to make the Israelite and Jewish viewpoints synonymous, e.g. “what is at stake is Paul’s claim to express an authentically *Jewish* viewpoint . . . to be speaking as a *Jew* (my emphasis).”³⁵ Everything depends on what one understands as an “authentically Jewish viewpoint.”

If the thesis of the present study is viable then something else is at stake in this passage. Although Paul himself is a *Ioudaios*, he is well aware of the freight that word carries and self-consciously uses it perhaps because of its broader and less circumscribed significance than the term Israelite. Note the statement in 11:26 that is so daring it takes the breath away (“all *Israel* will be saved”) and provokes Paul’s final soaring benediction (11:33–36, emphasis added). And as a part of a great mystery believing Gentiles, “wild olive shoots,” will also be grafted into the domestic stump (11:17–24).

Paul makes two other claims to his status as an Israelite though they have little bearing on this discussion. In 2 Cor 11:22 he compares himself with the “super apostles” (11:5) who are also Hebrews, Israelites and descendants of Abraham. These signifiers are all broader than the term *Ioudaioi*, and might argue for the provenance of these antagonists in some other location than Jerusalem. In Phil 3:11 in response to Judaizers whom he identifies as “evil-workers” and circumcisers, Paul offers an autobiographical remark that invites comparison. He too has reason for “confidence in the flesh”: “circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law a Pharisee, as to zeal a persecutor of the church, as to righteousness under the law blameless. But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ” (3:5–7). Surprisingly, in neither of these cases does Paul play his *Ioudaios* card to trump the claims of the adversaries even though in Philippi it would have seemed to be most apt. His appeal to his

³⁴ Dunn, *Romans*, 2:635.

³⁵ Dunn, *Romans*, 2:635.

Pharisaic status may in fact serve that function, but we can hardly be certain.

Conclusion

The case I have developed to test the viability of Boyarin's thesis and its applicability to Paul's letters would seem plausible. This preliminary investigation has shown that Paul claimed to be a *Ioudaios*. The full implications of that identification remain to be developed. Might it be that in Paul we have a complex blending of *Ioudaismos* and *Hellenismus*. The rules and manner of life that were used to bound, establish and maintain the identity of the *Ioudaioi* were hardly static, and were influenced, informed and shaped in countless ways by the Tarsus environment which was alive with Hellenistic religions and philosophical traditions. Paul's scriptures, the Septuagint, came from that environment. His first language was Greek. He was profoundly influenced by Hellenistic conventions of letter writing, and possibly popular Hellenistic rhetoric. Clearly there are implications here for a fresh appraisal of Paul's understanding of law especially in light of his apocalyptic vision. For if he self-consciously appropriated the broader term *Israelites* as a symbol of self-definition then the term might more easily accommodate an apocalyptic gospel that made room for Gentiles among God's elect.

At the same time, the full implication of Paul's preference for the term Israelite when speaking emphatically and autobiographically remains to be explored. This study can only hint that that preference has something to do with his Gentile mission and the impact his Christ commitment had on that usage. The full negative implications of translating the term *Ioudaios* almost always as "Jew" are yet to be explored and possibly revised or confirmed. I hope this study in some small way reflects the spirit of David E. Aune's scholarship that always raises tough questions, challenges established positions, and suggests fresh and exciting alternatives that open up the possibility for further exploration.

CRUCIFIED FOR HIS OWN SINS—
CRUCIFIED FOR OUR SINS:
OBSERVATIONS ON A PAULINE PERSPECTIVE

Peder Borgen

It is a privilege and a pleasure for me to contribute to the *Festschrift* in honour of my treasured colleague and good friend David E. Aune. He spent one year as a Fulbright Professor at our Department of Religious Studies at The University of Trondheim, Norway. He made a significant contribution both by his teaching and through his research. He helped us to organize research seminars on a regular basis and strengthened our relationship with the section on Classical Studies at the Department of History. He improved his Norwegian and came into contact with his relatives in central Norway. He and his family also enriched us socially. His extensive and broad knowledge of the New Testament and of the wider Greco-Roman world, and his industrious and well organized way of doing research, are impressive. Throughout the years I have had the privilege of meeting him at conferences, seminars and at other occasions.

In his research David Aune has analysed and discussed many parts of the New Testament, including the Pauline Letters. It seems then appropriate for me to take up a Pauline topic with some emphasis on passages in Paul's Letter to the Romans. The topic deals with aspects related to Paul's theological explications of the tradition which he received and transmitted, that "Christ died for our sins".

1. *Jesus Christ, a Cursed Criminal*

Paul explicitly states in 1 Cor 15:4–5 that he has transmitted to the congregation in Corinth a tradition which he himself has received:¹

¹ See P. Borgen, "In accordance with the Scriptures," in *Early Christian Thought in Its Jewish Context: Festschrift in Honor of Morna Hooker* (ed. J. M. G. Barclay and J. P. M. Sweet; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 193–206; esp. 197–200. It is not clear where the transmitted traditional unit in 1 Cor 15:4ff. ends.

For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received,
 That Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures,
 That he was buried,
 That he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures. . .

The manner of Christ's death is not specified in this piece of tradition. Elsewhere Paul tells that Christ was executed by means of crucifixion. Earlier in the First Letter to the Corinthians he writes: "... we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles . . . , 1 Cor 1:23, cf. 1:17 and 2:2. In Gal 3:1 Paul refers to the crucifixion in an emphatic way: "... Jesus Christ . . . openly portrayed as crucified . . .", and in Philippians 2:8 he writes: "even death on a cross". Thus Paul makes clear that Jesus was executed by means of crucifixion as a criminal. Accordingly, the words "died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures" presupposes that an opposite view was held by those who executed him. They maintained that he, in accordance with the laws, died for his own sins, his own crimes. Paul agrees with them that Jesus' death on the cross was that of a criminal. Thus, when he was a zealous persecutor of the Christians, his view was that Jesus was a criminal. He then changed his understanding and identified himself with the tradition transmitted in Christian communities: Christ was *crucified for our crimes*.

The view that Christ was crucified for his own crimes is implied by Paul when he in Gal 3:13 quotes the law in Deut 21:23 (probably influenced by Deut 27:26). Paul writes: "... for it is written, 'Cursed is every one who hangs on a tree.'" In Deut 21:22–23 it is clearly stated that the one who is hanged on a tree is a criminal who himself has committed a crime punishable by death: "And if a man has committed a crime punishable by death and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree, his body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but you shall bury him on the same day, for a hanged man is accursed by God . . ." ² Also in 2 Cor 5:21 Paul states the Jesus was executed as a criminal: God "made him to be sin". According to Rom 8:3 Jesus was sent in the likeness of sinful flesh.

Then Paul, at the time when he violently persecuted the Christians, knew that Jesus was executed by means of crucifixion, and maintained that Jesus died as a criminal for his own sins.

² See P. Borgen, "Openly Portrayed as Crucified: Some Observations on Gal 3:1–14," in *Christology, Controversy and Community: Festschrift in Honor of David R. Catchpole* (ed. D. G. Horrell and C. M. Tuckett; Leiden: Brill, 2000), 345–353.

Paul does not specify the crimes which Jesus had committed.³ The question might nevertheless be raised. How far is it possible to identify traditions which, with some degree of probability, may be traced back to the first century A.D.? G. Stanton has recently examined this material. He concludes that a widespread view was that Jesus was a magician and a false prophet who deceived God's people.⁴ Justin wrote that many who saw the miracles of Jesus "said it was the display of magic art, for they even dared to say that he was a magician and a deceiver of the people," *Dialogue* 69.7. The term 'deceiver' is being used against the background of Deut 13:5 about a false prophet who leads God's people astray. In *b. Sanhedrin* 43a a legal accusation against Jesus is pictured and Deut 13:8 is cited:⁵

On the eve of Passover Yeshu was hanged. For forty days before the execution took place, a herald went forth and cried, He is going forth to be stoned because he has practised sorcery and enticed and led Israel astray. Anyone who can say anything in his favour, let him come forward and plead on his behalf. But since nothing was brought forward in his favour, he was hanged on the eve of Passover.

Ulla retorted: Do you suppose that he was one for whom a defence could be made? Was he not *a deceiver*, concerning whom scripture says [Deut 13:8], "Neither shalt thou spare neither shalt thou conceal him."

Some formulations in the Gospels show affinities with this picture of Jesus as a criminal who led people astray: "... others said: 'No, he is leading the people astray'" (John 7:12); "The Pharisees answered them, 'Are you led astray also?'" (John 7:47). Likewise, in Luke 23:2,5 and 14 it is stated that Jesus was leading people astray, and in Matthew 27:63–64 the chief priests and the Pharisees characterized Jesus as a deceiver and his life is summed up as 'deception'.

³ As for Paul's self-understanding and activity as a radical Pharisee, zealous for the Law, and as a persecutor of the Christians, see K. Haacker, "Die Berufung des Verfolgers und die Rechtfertigung des Gottlosen. Erwägungen zum Zusammenhang zwischen Biographie und Theologie des Apostels Paulus," *TBei* 6.1 (1975): 1–19. Cf. Also T. Seland, "Saul of Tarsus and Early Zealotism: Reading Gal 1,13–14 in Light of Philo's writings," *Bib* 83 (2002): 449–471.

⁴ See the discussion of the sources in G. N. Stanton, "Jesus of Nazareth: A Magician and a False Prophet Who Deceived God's People," in *Jesus of Nazareth, Lord and Christ: Festschrift in Honor of I. Howard Marshall* (ed. J. B. Green and M. Turner; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 164–180; and idem, *Jesus and Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 127–147.

⁵ Cited from Stanton, *Jesus and Gospel*, 130.

Jesus is not explicitly called a magician in the Gospels, but his healing activity and exorcisms are, by those who rejected Jesus, said to be carried out by demons and evil spirits, Matt 9:34; 10:25; 12:24 and 27; Mark 3:22.⁶

Moreover, the Gospels display that there is a connection between points of criticism of and accusations against Jesus during his ministry and accusations brought against him in the passion story, corresponding to the integral relationship between crimes committed and punishments. In a recent book on the Gospel of Mark, H. N. Roskam has a chapter with the heading "The Reason for Jesus' Crucifixion in Mark's Gospel."⁷ His observations may be summarized in this way: Jesus' crimes were his blasphemous claim that he had the authority to forgive sins, 2:1–12, his table fellowship with sinners and tax collectors, 2:15–17, his liberal attitude towards fasting and work activity on the Sabbath, 2:18–28, his healing of a man with a withered hand on the Sabbath, Mk. 3:1–6, his cleansing of the Temple, which he characterized as a den of robbers, 11:15–19, and the impact made on the multitude who were astonished at his teaching, and his negative words about the temple cult, 11:15–18. Correspondingly, in the passion story Jesus was accused and executed for blasphemous words and actions, for having political aspirations, and for undermining the authority of leading Jews, 14:53–65. Thus, Mark to some degree contains a 'crimes-and-(legal trial-and)-punishments-report'.

In a corresponding way the structure of a 'crimes-and-punishment-report' is evident in the Gospel of John.⁸ Jesus' crimes were his healing of the paralytic on the Sabbath and allowing him to carry his mat, John 5:1–18 and 7:20, his blasphemous claim of being equal to God, 5:17–18, his false teaching, leading the people astray, 7:12,47, and his false teaching and claims for himself which caused him to

⁶ Stanton, *Jesus and Gospel*, 142. See also T. Seland, *Establishment Violence in Philo and Luke. A Study of Non-Conformity to the Torah and Jewish Vigilante Reactions* (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 276, n. 208.

⁷ H. N. Roskam, *The Purpose of the Gospel of Mark and Its Historical and Social Context* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 190–218. See also T. A. Burkill, *New Light on the Earliest Gospel* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1972), 48–70.

⁸ S. Pancaro, *The Law in the Fourth Gospel* (Leiden: Brill, 1975), 9–125, 489–508. Cf. R. A. Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A Study in Literary Design* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983), 86–98, 125–131. Cf. A. E. Harvey, *Jesus on Trial. A Study in the Fourth Gospel* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1977) and A. T. Lincoln, *Truth on Trial: the Lawsuit Motif in the Fourth Gospel* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2000).

be called a Samaritan and a person with a demon, 8:48, his healing on the Sabbath of the man born blind, 9:16, his claim of being the good shepherd, which caused him to be accused for having a demon and being mad, and for blasphemy because he claimed to be one with the Father, 10:20,33, and his subversive activity by gaining a large following so as to be a threat to the Temple and the nation. 11:45–52. At the trial in Jerusalem Jesus was accused of and executed for blasphemy, for his attack on the Sabbath laws and for his attack on the authority of the law itself, and for his subversive teaching and activity, John 18:19–19:22. This survey makes evident that the structure of ‘crimes-and-(legal trial-and)-punishments’ is present in the Gospel of John.

Conclusion: Both extra-canonical sources as Justin’s *Dialogue* and rabbinical writings and intra-canonical traditions in the Gospels illuminate ways in which Jesus’ activities and teachings were seen as crimes for which he was accused and executed to death by means of crucifixion. Through the reports on the crimes of Jesus found in the Gospel of Mark, the written documentation of such traditions can be traced back to around 70 A.D., that is, between one and two decades after Paul wrote his letters and gave the earliest preserved written documentation of the crucifixion of Jesus as a criminal.⁹

Although there is no way of knowing exactly what crimes Paul—as a persecutor of the Christians—attributed to Jesus as a cause for him being executed as a criminal, it is of interest to survey accusations against Jesus found in traditions which can be followed back to a time close to that of Paul. Such a survey is a reminder of the circumstance that parallel to the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ there were also (at some places) communications being spread around that Jesus had been a person who led people astray and was executed as a criminal. As a persecutor of the Christians, Paul functioned within this general context.

Paul did not recast a crime report of the crucified Jesus Christ by presenting his ministry positively within a larger body of traditions, as did Mark and the other evangelists. He came to share the Christian conviction, however, that although Jesus was crucified as a criminal,

⁹ R. E. Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (New York: Doubleday, 1997), 165: “there is wide scholarly agreement that Mark was written in the late 60s or just after 70.” H. D. Betz, “Paul,” in *ABD* 5:192: “. . . we find general agreement in assigning . . . the extant letters to the early and mid-50s.”

he was innocent. He knew no sin, 2 Cor 5:21. In Paul's view, 'we' are the criminals. Jesus died for *our sins* in accordance with the scriptures, 1 Cor 15:3. "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us", Rom 5:8.

At times Paul gives more elaborate presentations of 'our' crimes. In the following two examples will be given. The first example is a record of a brief catalogue of crimes and of corresponding punishments, together with an introductory statement about the nature of the crimes and of the basis for the punishments of the culprits: they were guilty. The second example has the form of an autobiographical story in 'I'-form of a contrite wrongdoer.

2. *We Are the Criminals*

David Aune has maintained that in Paul's Letter to the Romans "large sections of text (1:16–2:11; 2:12–4:25; 5:1–8:39; 9:1–11:36) show signs of having been developed orally during many years of Paul's preaching, teaching and debating . . . Paul is reusing material he had carefully honed over many years. . . ." ¹⁰ In accordance with these observations, scholars have looked into traditional and conventional features in the text and searched for parallel material in a broad range of sources. In the following some further observations along these lines are made on Rom 1:18–32 and Rom 7:7–8:4 to show that an aim of Paul is to document that, although Jesus Christ was executed by crucifixion as a criminal, he did not die for his own crimes, but for ours.

2.1. *Example 1: Rom 1:18–32*

Since Christ died for our sins, 1 Cor 15:3, the question should be asked: Who are 'we', the sinners? Paul renders a Jewish view in Gal 2:15: "We who are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners. . . ." The non-Jews were the sinners. The challenge which Paul faced was to rethink and revise this view, and define how both Jews and Gentiles were to be understood as sinners. This process of Paul's re-thinking is reflected in the rather complex section of Rom 1:18–3:20/4:25.

¹⁰ D. E. Aune, "Romans, Paul's Letter to the," in *The Westminster Dictionary of New Testament and Early Christian Literature and Rhetoric* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2004), 430–431.

Paul's dynamic move in Rom 1:18–3:20–4:25 is to join together Biblical ethno-theology and biblical anthropology in such a way that his conclusion is: there is no distinction; all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 3:22–23. In 3:24–25 Paul relates this characterization of humankind as criminals, to the death of Christ Jesus: "For there is no distinction; since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, they are justified by grace as a gift, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as an expiation by his blood. . . ." He continues these themes all through to Rom 4:24–25: ". . . Jesus our Lord who was put to death for our trespasses and raised for our justification". Paul offers here one interpretation of the points 'died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures' and 'that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures' in the Christological tradition which he had received, 1 Cor 15:3–4.

A list of 'crimes-and-punishments' is seen in Rom 1:(21)22–32. In the essay "Die adäquate Vergeltung in Röm 1:22–31," B. Klostermann observed that the idea of retribution was central to Paul here.¹¹ With this topical point of departure Klostermann sought out a broad range of parallels, such as 2 Macc 5:9f., 9:5ff., 13:7; Wisd 11:6ff., 15ff., 18:4f. and Philo, *In Flaccum* 20 (where the relevant paragraphs are §§ 169–175).¹²

In his essay Klostermann also made some observations on form. He observed that the paragraph Rom 1:22–31 is divided into three parts, vv. 22–24, 25–27, and 28. This division is evident from the repetition of the phrase (διό, διὰ τοῦτο) παρέδωκεν αὐτοὺς ὁ θεός, 'for that reason God handed them over' or 'therefore God gave them up' in vv. 24, 26 and 28, each time preceded by a recording of the crime. According to Klostermann the passage about the governor Flaccus' confession of crimes committed against the Alexandrian Jews, *Flac.* 170–175, was a most glorious example of the same form as the one found in Rom, 1:22–28.¹³

Klostermann's observation can be followed up by further analysis of the texts, and another parallel, Rev 18:4–8, should be included. These passages have in common the following characteristics:

¹¹ B. Klostermann, "Die adäquate Vergeltung in Röm 1:22–31," *ZNW* 32 (1933): 1–6.

¹² The parenthesis is added by the present author.

¹³ Klostermann, "Die adäquate Vergeltung," 5: "Ein besonderes Glanzstück."

- A general introduction in which the nature of the crime and the punishment is stated.
- A list of crimes followed by the corresponding punishments. With some variations in terminology the formulations are: crime done and therefore an appropriate punishment follows.

In *In Flaccum* 170–75 the pagan person, Flaccus, in Corybantic frenzy, offers a prayer to (the Jewish) God. The theme of Flaccus' prayer is stated in the introduction as a) God's providential activity for the Jewish nation by punishing their persecutor, Flaccus, and b) the counterbalance between crimes and punishments experienced by Flaccus:¹⁴

Introduction

170 a) so then Thou dost not disregard the nation of the Jews,
nor do they misreport Thy Providence,
but all who say that they do not in Thee find a champion and
defender,
go astray from the true creed.

b) I am a clear proof of this,
for (ὅσα γὰρ) all the acts which I madly committed against the Jews
I have suffered myself.

The list of crimes and penalties (A few examples are quoted):

The crime

171 I allowed them to be robbed of their possessions by giving free
licence to the plunderers.

Punishment

For that (διὰ τοῦτο) I had taken from me my heritage from father
and mother and all I received by way of benefactions and gifts and
other possessions which do not fall under this head.

Crime

172 I cast on them the slur that they were foreigners without civic
rights, though they were inhabitants with full franchise, just to please

¹⁴ *Philo with and English Translation* (ed. and trans. F. H. Colson; vol. 9; LCL; Cambridge, MA: 1960). Cf. further P. Borgén, "Philo's *Against Flaccus* as Interpreted History," in *A Bouquet of Wisdom: Festschrift in Honor of K.-G. Sandelin* (ed. K.-J. Illman et al.; Aabo: Aabo Academy, 2000), 50–52.

their adversaries, a disorderly and unstable horde, whose flattery, to my sorrow, deceived me,

Punishment

and therefore (διὰ τοῦτο), I have lost my rights and have been driven in exile from all the habitable world to be shut up here.

Crime

173 Some I marched into the theatre and order them to be maltreated before the eyes of their bitterest enemies unjustly,

Punishment

and therefore (τοιγαροῦν), justly, I was maltreated in my miserable soul rather than in my body, with the utmost contumely; I was not indeed marched into one theatre or one city but was paraded through all Italy to Brundisium and through all the Peloponnese to Corinth and past Attica and the islands to Andros my prison.

As seen from the introduction, the list serves as documentation of the kind of divine justice that was at work. In the list itself each point consists of two parts, the crime and the corresponding punishment. Flaccus fears that more punishments are in reserve to complete the sum and counterbalance all that he did. Here he personifies the process: it is the action of the goddesses of vengeance: “Their [the Jews’] avenging furies (αἱ Ποιναί) await me, I know full well. The ministers of punishments (οἱ ἀλάστορες) are already as it were standing at the barriers and press forward eager for my blood” (*Flac.* 175).

A corresponding list of crimes and punishments is found in Rev 18:4–18, here in the form of a command made by a voice from heaven. The correspondence and relationship between crimes and punishments are characterized in the introduction. Un-identified agents are commanded to execute the penalties for crimes committed, corresponding to the ‘avenging furies’ and the ‘ministers of punishment’ in *Flac.* 175. Moreover, the people of God are summoned to flight. The nature and volume of the crimes committed are characterized: ‘her sins are heaped high as heaven’, Rev 18:5. Finally, the principle for the measuring out of the punishment is given: double repayment of the crime done, v. 6. Rev 18:6–8 reads:

Introduction

4. Come out of her, my people,
lest you take part of her sins,
lest you share in her plagues,
5. for her sins are heaped high as heaven,
and God has remembered her iniquities.
6. Render to her as she herself has rendered,
and repay her double for her deeds;
mix a double draught for her in the cup she mixed.

*The list of crimes and penalties:**Crime*

- 7a. As (ὅσα) she glorified herself and played the wanton,

Punishment

- so (τοσοῦτον) give her the same measure of torment and mourning.

Crime

- 7b. Since (ὅτι) in her heart she said,
'A queen I sit, I am no widow, mourning I shall never see',

Punishment

8. so (διὰ τοῦτο) shall her plagues come in a single day,
pestilence and mourning and famine
and she shall be burned with fire;
for mighty is the Lord God who judges her.

Rom 1:18–32 has the same structure: introduction in vv. 18–21, cf. Rev 18:4–6 and *Flac.* 170, and then a list of crimes and punishments, vv. 22–32, cf. Rev 18:7–8 and *Flac.* 170–173/175.

As stated, Rom 1:18–21 serve as introduction. According to verse 18, "For the wrath of God is revealed . . .", the basis for the punishment is the wrath of God. The evil deeds are characterized as ungodliness and unrighteousness. This verse does not only introduce the immediate context, but serves as a general introduction for the whole section of 1:18–3:20, in which the sinful state of humankind is outlined. Verses 1:19–21 are more of a direct introduction to the list of crimes and punishments in vv. 22–32. The main point in vv. 19–20 is that the criminals are guilty and without excuse. In v. 21 the nature of the crime is further specified: "they did not honour Him as God or give Him thanks."

Introduction

18. For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of human beings who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.

19. For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them.

20. Ever since the creation of the world his invisible nature, namely, his eternal power and deity, has been clearly perceived in the things that have been made. Consequently, they are without excuse.

21. For knowing God they did not honour Him as God or give Him thanks, but became futile in their thinking and their foolish hearts were darkened.

*The list of crimes and punishments:**Crime*

22. Claiming to be wise they became fools,

23. and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man or birds or animals or reptiles.

Punishment

24. Therefore (διό) God handed them over to the desires of their hearts to impurity to the dishonouring of their bodies among themselves.

Crime

25. They exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator (who is blessed for ever, Amen)

Punishment

26–27. For this reason (διὰ τοῦτο) God handed them over to dishonourable passions.

Crime

28a. And just as (καθώς) they did not see fit to acknowledge God,

Punishment

28b–31. God handed them over to a base mind and to do what is improper

The prepositional phrase διὰ τοῦτο is used in all three texts, *Flac.* 171 and 172, Rev 18:8, and Rom 1:26. Other causal words used are (τοιγαροῦν) in *Flac.* 173, and (διό) in Rom 1:24. The correlative pronouns ὅσα—τοσούτων are used in Rev 18:7. Correspondingly, the adverb (καθώς), just as (*BD*, 453: 2 and 3), serves as correlative and gives the cause for the corresponding punishment in Rom 1:28.

The conclusion is: Rom 1:18–32, *Flac.* 170–175, and Rev 18:4–8 consist of lists of crimes and punishments introduced by characterizations of the crimes committed and information about the basis for the punishments. In *Flac.* 170–175 the punishments of the persecutor of God's people are proofs of God's providential care, and correspondingly, in Rev 18:4–8 God has remembered the iniquities of 'Babylon', and she is to be punished, and in Rom 1:18–32 God's wrath is revealed against all unrighteousness of humankind, Rom 1:18–32. A special feature of Paul is the understanding that an innocent person, Christ Jesus, suffered death penalty for the trespasses of humankind, Rom 3:24–25 and 4:25.

2.2. *Rom 7:7–8:4: A Comparison of the Two Examples*

In Rom 1:18–32 Paul uses the form of a list of crimes and punishments to describe the unrighteousness of humankind and to outline how God acted accordingly. Another way of reporting on the crime and punishment of a person is to use the form of a crime story. Rom 7:7–8:4 may serve as an example.¹⁵ This section consists of three parts: a) The verses 7–13 contain a report in the past tense. A divine intervention came by means of a communication through the law. In this way the wrongdoing of the person 'I' was unveiled. He recognized and admitted that he was a lawbreaker. b) In verses 14–25 the report changes to the present tense. This shift indicates that Paul has changed to the existential reflections made by the person 'I'.¹⁶ One observation should be made at this point. The dual perspective of law and lawbreaker, vv. 7–13, is in vv. 15–23 internalized exis-

¹⁵ See P. Borgen, "The Contrite Wrongdoer—Condemned or Set Free by the Spirit? Romans 7:7–8:4," in *The Holy Spirit and Christian Origins: Festschrift in Honor of J. D. G. Dunn* (ed. G. N. Stanton, B. W. Longenecker, and S. C. Barton; Grand Rapids, MI/Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 2004), 181–192.

¹⁶ Cf. H. Lichtenberger, *Studien zur paulinischen Anthropologie in Römer 7. (Habilitationsschrift, Eberhard-Karls-Universität Tübingen, 1985)* 147, 173–175.

tentially in two ways. First, the person confesses that he does what he does not want to do. Thereby he agrees that the law is good. The (personalized) sin that dwells in the person acts, not he himself. Second, there is a war between the law of the person's mind and the law of sin which dwells in his members. In vv. 24–25 an existential exclamation follows. c) The verdict is recorded in 8:1–4.

Scholars have drawn on material from Jewish sources and non-Jewish sources to illuminate parts of Romans 7:7–8:4. In a recent study I have examined Jewish and non-Jewish parallels which show that the section as a whole follows a conventional model for stories about contrite criminals.¹⁷

In the present study material from Sophocles (5th Century B.C.), *Antigone*,¹⁸ Philo (mainly 1st Century A.D.) *In Flaccum*, and from *Joseph and Aseneth* (somewhere between c. 200 B.C. and c. 100 A.D.)¹⁹ and Gen 2–3 will be utilized to illuminate points in Rom 7:7–8:4. Some of the similarities are:

a) Divine interventions related to divine laws and divine authority brought a change to take place in the lives of the wrongdoers:

In the tragedy *Antigone* by Sophocles King Creon condemned Antigone for giving an honorable and proper burial to Polyneices who was a traitor. The divine intervention came through the seer Teiresias, who admonished Creon to repent. King Creon changed his decision, although too late. Antigone had hanged herself.

In the Jewish book *Joseph and Aseneth*, Aseneth insulted Joseph. Joseph's epiphanic appearance and his blessing made her to repent her misdeed against him, and also to repent of the gods she used to worship. In Philo's treatise, *In Flaccum*, Flaccus offered prayer to God in Corybantic frenzy, and admitted his crimes: "... all the acts which I madly made committed against the Jews I have suffered myself (§ 170). According to Gen 2–3 God came and unveiled the obedience of Adam and Eve. They admitted their misdeed.

¹⁷ See M. Meiser, "Gattung, Adressaten und Intention von *Philos In Flaccum*," *JST* 30 (1999): 421, n. 21, and Borgen, "The Contrite Wrongdoer," 182.

¹⁸ Sophocles, *Antigone*, *The Women of Trachis*, *Philoctetes*, *Oedipus at Colonus* (ed. and trans. H. Lloyd-Jones; LCL; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994).

¹⁹ M. Philonenko, *Joseph et Aséneth* (Studia Post-Biblica 13; Leiden: Brill, 1968). The translation used is that of C. Burchard, "Joseph and Aseneth," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (ed. J. H. Charlesworth; Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1985), 177–247.

As mentioned above, in the section Rom 7:7–8:4 the law, *in casu* the tenth commandment (Ex 20:17 and Deut 5:21), spoke and made the person to recognize the crime and admit that sin had been committed: “But I would not have known what sin was except through the law. For I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, ‘Do not covet’ . . . In the absence of law I was once alive, but when the commandment came, sin became alive and I died,” Rom 7:7–9. The active revelatory function of the law is evident. The person recognized the authority of the law that had spoken to him and repented.

b) Existential reactions took place:

When King Creon heard the seer Teiresias’ prediction of doom he experienced an inner conflict: “. . . my mind is disturbed. For to yield would be terrible, but if I resist, my will may run into the fowler’s nest of disaster” (*Antigone*, ll. 1095–1097). When he found Antigone, his son Haemon, and wife, Eurydicé, dead, king Creon exclaims: “Wretched I am (*Antigone* l. 1310).” The King laments and asks: “Woe, woe, all-receiving Hades, never to be appeased. Why, why do you destroy me?” (ll. 1283–1285).

As for *Joseph and Aseneth*, 6, in the longer text of P. Batiffol Aseneth’s exclamations of lament are followed by questions. One example is quoted: Woe to me the miserable one! With now shall I the miserable one depart?”²⁰

In Flaccus’ case there are quite dramatic reactions pictured: Flaccus let a stream of tears pour down, and he smote his breast with bitter wailing, and acted like a madman. (*Flac.* 157, 162, and 168). He was a wretched person, § 167. He had no hope, and exclaimed: “That their [the Jews whom he killed] avenging furies await me I know full well” (§ 175).

Adam and Eve reacted when they heard the sound of the Lord walking in the garden. They hid themselves. In answering God’s question they admitted their disobedience, but Adam put the blame on Eve, and Eve put the blame on the serpent. They were still responsible for what they had done.

In Rom 7:14–25 Paul reports on the struggle within the person “I”. He almost absolves the person from responsibility: The person-

²⁰ E. W. Smith Jr., “The Form and Religious Background of Romans VII 24–25a,” *NovT* 13 (1971): 128–130; Philonenko, *Joseph et Aséneth*, 148–150; P. Batiffol, *Le Livre de la Prière d’Aseneth* (StPatr 1–2; Paris: Leroux, 1889–1890).

alized 'Sin' is to be blamed. Although the person "I" is made a captive to the law of sin, he is still responsible, however. There is here a correspondence between the experience of the person "I" and the story of Adam and Eve: In both texts others are blamed, but the persons are still responsible.

The lament in Rom 7:24 "Wretched man I am," is parallel to the lament by king Creon in *Antigone*, 1. 1310, "Wretched I am" and by Aseneth in *Joseph and Aseneth* 6, where Aseneth exclaims, "Woe to me the miserable one" (from the longer text of Batiffol).

c) The verdict:

Flaccus suffered capital punishment. Executors sent by the Emperor Gaius (*Flac.* 185.191) slaughtered him. King Creon was punished by the suicidal deaths of Antigone, his son Haemon and his wife Eurydicé. The punishment of Adam and Eve (and the serpent) was expressed in God's curses upon them, Gen 3:14–19. The verdict implied in Rom 8:1, is that of condemnation.

In the cases of Aseneth and of the person "I" in Rom 7:7ff. the execution of the penalty is avoided. Aseneth avoided it by becoming a Jewish proselyte, and when a man from heaven came to her, she rejoiced and blessed God: "Blessed be the Lord your God, the Most High, who sent you out to rescue me from the darkness and to bring me up from the foundations of the abyss, and blessed be your name for ever" (*Joseph and Aseneth*, 15:12–13). Correspondingly, the person 'I' did not suffer the penalty due to the vicarious death of Christ: "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus", Rom 8:1. A thanksgiving is recorded in Rom 7:25a: "But thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

d) As in Rom 7:14–25, the first person singular is used in all the parallel texts: Thus Paul's use of the first person, 'I', seems written under the impact of autobiographical crime stories told about contrite lawbreakers.

These parallels support the understanding that Rom 7:7–8:4 has its background in autobiography, not (directly) in Paul's own experiences, but in a biographical conventional form which reports on wrongdoers who in various ways admit their misdeeds, affirm the authority of the law/the divine rule, react existentially, and face punishment or/and are set free.

It is of interest to compare the two passages which have been discussed, Rom 1:18–32(4:25) and 7:7–8:4. Some points of similarities

are: Both passages draw on biblical material. In 7:7 Paul cites the tenth commandment, "Do not covet".²¹ In 1:18–32 there is no explicit quotations, but in 1:23 Paul bases his argument on the Biblical idea of creation and uses words and phrases from Gen 1:20–27 and Psalm LXX 105:20: (πετεινά, τετάρποδα, ἐρπετά, ἄνθρωπος, ἀλλάσσω, ἡ δόξα, ἐν ὁμοιώματι).²² Both in Rom 1:18–32 and 7:7–8:4 the story of the fall of Adam and Eve seems to serve as a model, although there is no direct use of words from Gen 2 and 3.²³

In both places ideas with non-Jewish background are seen. Scholars have identified Stoic and other Hellenistic terms and ideas in Rom 1:19–20, 23 and 28, such as the terms 'invisible attributes' and 'perceive' (τὰ ἀόρατα, καθοράω), 'eternal' (αἰδίοος) and divinity (θειότης) in v. 20.²⁴ Such ideas had already influenced Jewish sources such as Wisdom of Solomon and Philo's writings, however.²⁵ Hommel and others have examined parallels to Paul's statement that a person does not do what he wants to do, Rom 7:19. Among the parallels, *Epictetus* 2.26.4 may be mentioned: "what he wants, he does not do, and what he does not want, he does."²⁶ It is important to note that there is a broad range of parallels to Paul's use of a catalogue of vices in Rom 1:29–31, from the catalogue in 1 QS 4:9–11, to those in various other Jewish writings, and to non-Jewish sources as those collected in von Arnim, *Stoicorum veterum fragmenta*.²⁷

²¹ J. A. Ziesler, "The Role of the Tenth Commandment in Romans 7," *JST* 33 (1988): 41–56. See also G. Theissen, *Psychologische Aspekte paulinischer Theologie* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1983), 204–213, and Lichtenberger, *Studien*.

²² See M. Hooker, "Adam in Romans I," *NTS* 6 (1959–1960): 300; J. D. G. Dunn, *Romans* (2 vols.; WBC 38A–B; Dallas: Word Books, 1988), 1:61–62.

²³ Hooker, "Adam in Romans I," 297–306 and Dunn, *Romans* 1:53. Concerning Rom 7, cf. J. D. G. Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* (Edinburgh: Clark, 1998), 98–100; C. E. B. Cranfield, *The Epistle to the Romans* (2 vols.; ICC; Edinburgh: Clark, 1975), 1:350–353; and other commentaries.

²⁴ M. Pohlenz, "Paulus und die Stoa," *ZNW* 42 (1949): 69–104; H. Lietzmann, *An die Römer* (HNT 3; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck; 2nd ed. 1919), 30–33; A. Friedrichsen, "Zur Auslegung von Röm 1:19f.," *ZNW* 17 (1916): 159–168; and commentaries.

²⁵ Cf. Dunn, *Romans* 1:53–70; and other commentaries.

²⁶ H. Hommel, "Das 7. Kapitel des Römerbrief im Licht antiker Überlieferung," *Theologia Viatorum* 8 (1962): 90–116; Theissen, *Psychologische Aspekte*, 213–23; Lichtenberger, "Studien," 192–201. D. E. Aune, "Zwei Modelle der menschlichen Natur bei Paulus," *TQ* 176 (1996): 28–39.

²⁷ von Arnim, *Stoicorum veterum fragmenta* (4 vols.; Leipzig: Teubner, 1903–1924), esp. 3:377–490. See commentaries on Romans and A. Vögtle, *Die Tugend- und Lasterkataloge exegetisch, religions- und formgeschichtlich untersucht* (Münster: Aaschendorff, 1936); S. Wibbing, *Die Tugend und Lasterkataloge im Neuen Testament und ihre Traditionsgeschichte unter besondere Berücksichtigung der Qumran-Texte* (Berlin: Alfred Töpelmann, 1959); Aune, "Catalogues of Vices and Virtues," in *The Westminster Dictionary*, 89–91.

In different ways Paul in both passages utilizes forms which are conventional: a list of crimes-and-punishments with an introduction in Rom 1:18–32, and the form of an autobiographical crime-and-punishment story in 7:7–8:4. In different ways Paul in both passages stresses that men (Rom 1:18–32) and ‘I’ (Rom 7:7–24) are responsible for their crimes.

Both texts reflect how Paul transforms the traditional Jewish understanding of the relationship between Jews and non-Jews. In the literary context of Romans Paul integrated Rom 1:18–32 into the larger section of 1:19–4:25. In this way the topic of non-Jews and Jews is taken up in an explicit way. Here the relationship between Jews and non-Jews is discussed from various angles: God’s impartiality; the final judgment of those not having the law (of Moses) relative to the judgment of those with the law; the transgression of the law by Jews, and Abraham as the father both of those circumcised and of those uncircumcised.

The theme of Jews and non-Jews is made less explicit in Rom 7:7–8:4. When Paul in 7:7 cites the tenth commandment “You shall not covet”, he knows that he cites from the law of the Jews. He draws on Adam and the Fall as a model and in that way brings in the perspective of humankind. The existential struggle within the person ‘I’ refers to the people of the law, the Jews and others to whom the commandment of the law speaks. Thus, in this passage the revealed law of the Jews identifies and clarifies the situation of both the Jewish person, and the non-Jewish person. Paul weaves together Jewish ethno-theology and general anthropology.²⁸

In present contexts in Romans, 7:7–8:4 is used by Paul to serve the literary aim of being a defense of the law, as is particular seen in vv. 12 (‘the law is holy’) and 16 (‘the law is good’). He also demonstrates the need for redemption and new life, as outlined in 7:25–8:30 (walk according to the Spirit, etc.). As for Rom 1:18–32, it has already been noticed that it serves as background for 3:21–25 (all have sinned—justified by grace—redemption which is in Christ Jesus) and forms an integral part of 1:18–4:25. Moreover, 1:18, “For the wrath of God is revealed . . .” is a contrast to 1:17: “In it [the gospel] the righteousness of God is revealed. . . .”

²⁸ Cf. J.-N. Aletti, “Rm 7:7–25 encore une fois: enjeux et propositions,” *NTS* 48 (2002): 358–376.

On this level a central question is: how are the various units of Paul's Letter to the Romans logically fitted together? Is there a continuous argumentation to be traced? How can the observations presented in this essay serve as background for a rhetorical analysis of the letter as a whole? By raising these questions about rhetorical analysis I move into a field of research on Romans to which David E. Aune and others have made significant contributions.²⁹

Conclusion

Paul makes clear that Jesus was executed by means of crucifixion as a criminal. The words "died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures" presuppose that an opposite view was held by those who executed him. They maintained that he, in accordance with the laws, was crucified for his own sins, his own crimes.

Paul agrees that Jesus' death on the cross was that of a criminal. Thus, when he was a zealous persecutor of the Christians, his view was that Jesus was a criminal. He then changed his understanding and identified himself with the tradition transmitted in Christian communities: Christ died *for our sins, for our crimes*. "God made him to be sin", however, cf. 2 Cor 5:21.

Although there is no way of knowing exactly what crimes Paul—as a persecutor of the Christians—attributed to Jesus as a cause for him being executed, it is of interest to survey accusations against Jesus found in traditions some of which can be followed back to those found in the Gospel of Mark which was written around 70 A.D., that is, between one and two decades after Paul wrote his letters and gave the earliest preserved written documentation of the crucifixion of Jesus as a criminal.

Paul came to share the Christian conviction that, although Jesus was crucified as a criminal, he was innocent. Instead of reporting on events in the ministry of Jesus on the basis of this conviction, Paul outlines *our* crimes and our crime story and explicates the meaning of the tradition that 'Christ died for *our sins*'.

²⁹ See e.g. Aune's "Romans as a *Logos Protreptikos*," in *The Romans Debate* (ed. K. Donfried; rev. and exp. ed.; Peabody, Hendrickson, 1991), 278–296. Cf. also his "Romans, Paul's Letter to the," in *The Westminster Dictionary*, 428–432. See further K. P. Donfried, "Introduction 1991: The Romans Debate since 1977," in *The Romans Debate*, lv–lxii.

Two passages are analysed as examples of ways in which Paul reports on the crimes of humankind: Rom 1:18–32 consists of a list of crimes and punishments introduced by characterizations of the crimes committed and of the basis for the punishments. Parallels to this form are found in Philo, *Flac.* 170–175 and in Rev 18:4–8.

In Rom 7:7–8:4 Paul uses a conventional form of an autobiographical crime-and-punishment story to characterize the representative ‘I’ as a contrite wrongdoer, who reacts with an existential outburst and receives a verdict. A large number of parallel stories about contrite wrongdoers are found in Jewish and Greek sources. A special point in Paul’s version is the conviction that condemnation is avoided by those who are in Christ Jesus.

Both Rom 1:18–32 and 7:7–8:4 reflect how Paul transforms the traditional Jewish understanding of the relationship between Jews and non-Jews. He deals with it in an explicit way in Rom 1:18–32 which is part of the larger section of 1:18–4:25. The theme of Jews and non-Jews is present in Rom 7:7–8:4 in a more implicit form. In both passages Paul outlines aspects of the ‘crime-story’ of humankind, specified as Jews and Gentiles.

Further analysis is needed to relate the observations made in this essay to the much-discussed question about the purpose and occasion of Paul’s Letter to the Romans.³⁰

³⁰ See Donfried, *The Romans Debate*, 175–242.

THE MISIDENTIFICATION OF
LERNA FOUNTAIN AT CORINTH:
IMPLICATIONS FOR INTERPRETATIONS OF THE
CORINTHIAN IDOL-FOOD ISSUE (1 COR 8:1–11:1)

John Fotopoulos

In their archaeological excavations of Corinth, F. J. de Waele and Carl Roebuck identified the Asklepieion of the city, as well as an adjacent spring, dining rooms, and peristyle court which they further identified as the fountain called Lerna by Pausanias. Many New Testament scholars have accepted de Waele's and Roebuck's identifications of the sites, and some scholars doing detailed investigations of Paul's instructions on idol-food (1 Cor 8:1–11:1) have made particular use of these identifications for their interpretations and reconstructions of the Corinthian idol-food issue. Consequently, some exegetes have alleged an ambiguous relationship between the Asklepieion and the nature of the food (sacrificial or non-sacrificial food?) that was consumed in these dining rooms. However, reconsideration of the archaeological record and consideration of newly discovered archaeological evidence such as the Fountain of the Lamps in this study show that de Waele and Roebuck misidentified the Asklepieion spring/dining room complex as Lerna. Therefore, this study will demonstrate that the adjacent spring and dining rooms were facilities of the Asklepieion and that diners at the site would have known that only sacrificial food was consumed there, while Lerna should be properly identified with the nearby Fountain of the Lamps.

1. *Excavations and Identification of the
Corinthian Asklepieion and Lerna Fountain*

In 1929 Ferdinand Joseph de Waele first investigated the northern periphery of ancient Corinth after a local villager, Athanasios Tsourapis, had found several Greek sherds in his field.¹ Exploratory trenches

¹ Noted in the first of F. J. de Waele's reports of the site's excavations, "The Sanctuary of Asklepios and Hygieia at Corinth," *AJA* 37 (1933): 417–51.

were dug in 1930 and systematic excavations began in the area in 1931 and continued into 1934.² Certainly the most significant find in the area was the sanctuary dedicated to Asklepios and an adjacent spring that was identified by de Waele as Lerna Fountain. Pausanias, in his travelogue of Corinth, had described a temple of Asklepios and fountain called Lerna in his route northward from the city's theater to the gymnasium area. Pausanias writes:

Τοῦ θεάτρου δέ ἐστι τοῦδε οὐ πόρρω γυμνάσιον τὸ ἀρχαῖον καὶ πηγὴ καλουμένη Λέρνα. Κίονες δὲ ἐστήκασιν περὶ αὐτὴν καὶ καθέδραι πεποίηται τοὺς ἐσελθόντας ἀναπύχειν ὥρα θέρους. Πρὸς τούτῳ τῷ γυμνασίῳ ναοὶ θεῶν εἰσιν ὁ μὲν Διός, ὁ δὲ Ἀσκληπιοῦ. Τὰ δὲ ἀγάλματα Ἀσκληπιδὸς μὲν καὶ Ὑγεία λευκοῦ, τὸ δὲ τοῦ Διὸς χαλκοῦν ἐστίν.

Not far from this theater is the ancient gymnasium and a spring called Lerna. Columns stand around it and seats have been made to refresh those who enter during summer time. Near this gymnasium are temples of the gods, the one of Zeus and the other of Asklepios. With regard to the statues, Asklepios and Hygeia are of white stone, while that of Zeus is of bronze.³

The temple of Asklepios that Pausanias mentioned was positively identified by de Waele based on the hundreds of terracotta votive offerings of cured body parts found at the site⁴ which testify to the popularity of the god's cult in Corinth dating from "the last quarter of the fifth century and the end of the fourth"⁵ century B.C.E. De Waele identified the spring adjacent to the Asklepieion as Lerna Fountain based on the extensive water system found at the site, the presence of κλῖναι (couches), and "a large square . . . surrounded by porticoes and a *peristasis* of columns."⁶ Although de Waele recognized that there was some difficulty in identifying the κλῖναι found at the site with the καθέδραι mentioned by Pausanias, he insisted that this was the site described by the *periegete* Pausanias.⁷ De Waele writes:

² F. J. de Waele, "The Fountain of Lerna and the Early Christian Cemetery at Corinth," *AJA* 39 (1935): 352–359.

³ Pausanias, 2.4.5.

⁴ De Waele, "The Sanctuary of Asklepios," 422–23.

⁵ Carl A. Roebuck, *Corinth: Results of Excavations Conducted by the American School of Classical Studies at Athens*, Vol. XIV, *The Asklepieion and Lerna* (Princeton, NJ: The American School of Classical Studies at Athens, 1951), 113.

⁶ De Waele, "The Sanctuary of Asklepios," 432.

⁷ De Waele, "The Sanctuary of Asklepios," 432.

In the narrative of the *periegete* the fountain of Lerna is described together with the old gymnasium, the Asklepieion and the temple of Zeus, and one can hardly imagine that there is still another complex of constructions for water-supply in the immediate vicinity of the Asklepieion which better deserves the name than the one discovered in these campaigns.⁸

Unfortunately, due to the large scale destruction of de Waele's written notes and illustrations of the site during World War II, he was not able to complete a final publication of the excavations. Consequently, in 1946–47 Carl Roebuck assumed the responsibility of completing de Waele's work with the intention of producing this final publication, supported by the American School of Classical Studies at Athens. The findings in Roebuck's publication were based on de Waele's previous excavations, as well as on new excavations of the site conducted by Roebuck.⁹

Roebuck followed de Waele's positive identification of the sites as the Asklepieion and Lerna based on Pausanias' description and the previous discovery of the terracotta votive offerings mentioned above.¹⁰ The excavations indicate that the sanctuary was built in the fourth century B.C.E. over the site of an earlier shrine. Asklepios' popularity seems to have necessitated a more accommodating complex which consisted of an altar, an offertory box, a gleaming white, blue, and bright red Doric temple, a two-story abaton building suited for incubation of devotees on its upper level. This abaton building also had three dining rooms on its lower level. There were also several colonnades and a lustral room that received its water from the adjacent spring that was surrounded by a peristyle court. Roebuck raised the question whether the entire site was to be considered an Asklepieion, with Lerna serving as a resort for patients, or whether Lerna was a public fountain serving that quarter of the city. Roebuck decided in favor of the latter interpretation since he believed that the large capacity of water at Lerna indicated that it was a public water supply. Nevertheless, Roebuck maintained that since Lerna "was closely linked with the Asklepieion, that patients also made use of its facilities."¹¹ The additional construction of a building over the

⁸ De Waele, "The Fountain of Lerna," 354.

⁹ Roebuck, *Corinth*, XIV, v.

¹⁰ Roebuck, *Corinth*, XIV, 2.

¹¹ Roebuck, *Corinth*, XIV, 25.

ramp which connected the Asklepieion sanctuary with the adjacent spring in the Roman period was interpreted by Roebuck as emphasizing the “public character of Lerna.”¹² He asserted that this interpretation is strengthened because Pausanias did not closely associate the Asklepieion and Lerna in his description of the area.¹³ Roebuck concluded that “it is probable that Lerna was regarded in some degree as the secular part of the establishment.”¹⁴

*2. Excavations of the Fountain of the Lamps, its
Proper Identification as Lerna Fountain, and the
Corinthian Asklepieion and its Spring as a Unified Site*

Although Pausanias’ description, at face value, does seem to support Roebuck’s and de Waele’s identification of the spring adjacent to the Asklepieion as Lerna Fountain, this identification is problematic. Roebuck and de Waele identified this spring as Lerna Fountain based on Pausanias’ description of Lerna and its location relative to the Asklepieion. However, since the time of their excavations at the site, another fountain house has been discovered just two-hundred meters away from the Asklepieion that closely corresponds with Pausanias’ description of Lerna and is more consistent with his route north from Corinth’s theater toward the gymnasium area. In 1967 a grotto fountain was discovered in the area around the gymnasium that has been named the Fountain of the Lamps by its excavators because of the thousands of terracotta lamps that were found in the fountain that had been thrown in as votive offerings after its destruction in the late fourth century C.E.¹⁵ The Fountain of the Lamps consists of an underground bathing room with a large bench complete with backrests, a fountain house, a large outdoor courtyard with a large bench and a swimming pool that seems to have had a marble colonnaded entrance.¹⁶ James Wiseman, director of excavations at the

¹² Roebuck, *Corinth*, XIV, 25.

¹³ Pausanias, 2.4.5.

¹⁴ Roebuck, *Corinth*, XIV, 25.

¹⁵ Reports on the Fountain of the Lamps have been published by James Wiseman: “Excavations in Corinth, The Gymnasium Area, 1967–1968,” *Hesperia* 38 (1969): 64–106; idem, “The Gymnasium Area at Corinth, 1969–1970,” *Hesperia* 41 (1972): 1–42; idem, “The Fountain of the Lamps,” *Archaeology* 23.2 (1970): 130–37.

¹⁶ Wiseman, “The Gymnasium Area at Corinth, 1969–1970,” 9–22.

Fountain of the Lamps, questioned the accuracy of identifying the spring adjacent to the Asklepieion with Lerna and suggested that the Fountain of the Lamps was a more likely candidate as Lerna, but Wiseman did not elaborate on this.¹⁷ However, in 1984 C. K. Williams firmly identified the Fountain of the Lamps as Lerna based on his excavations which attempted to reconstruct the route to Sikyon and, thus, Pausanias' route northward from the theater to the gymnasium area. Consequently, Williams concluded that the fountain identified originally as Lerna is "an unnamed lower court of the Asklepieion itself."¹⁸ The columns standing around the Fountain of the Lamps, its underground bathing room and outdoor pool with their large καθέδραι fit Pausanias' description of Lerna precisely as a spring with columns around it having seats offering refreshment to those who enter in summer time.

The identification of the Fountain of the Lamps as Lerna, rather than that of the spring adjacent to the Asklepieion, is further strengthened by a reconsideration of evidence presented from the Asklepieion itself. The excavations of the site demonstrated that the sanctuary and its adjacent spring with colonnaded courtyard were, according to Roebuck, "laid out and built as a single complex."¹⁹ The only real challenge to the identification of the Asklepieion and the adjacent spring as a single site from the archaeological record is that a long ramp which provided primary access between the precinct and spring courtyard had a building constructed over it sometime in the mid-first century C.E. This effectively put the ramp out of use. However, because it cannot be ascertained with absolute certainty when this new construction occurred, the ramp could have been functioning at the time of 1 Corinthians' composition. If such was the case, no physical barrier yet existed which could obstruct access between the precinct and the adjacent spring. However, if the ramp did have a new building constructed over it at the time of 1 Corinthians' composition, the Asklepieion and its spring could still be perceived as a single site. Excavations indicate that the new Roman building constructed over the ramp contained eight cellar rooms, each divided with cross-walls on the lower level, while the first floor probably had

¹⁷ Wiseman, "The Fountain of the Lamps," 137.

¹⁸ C. K. Williams and O. H. Zervos, "Corinth, 1983: The Route to Sikyon," *Hesperia* 53 (1984): 103.

¹⁹ Roebuck, *Corinth*, XIV, 24.

a row of rooms corresponding to those in the cellar below. Unfortunately, the available evidence does not allow identification of the superstructure.²⁰ Roebuck's theory for the construction of the new building over the ramp stems from his identification of the adjacent spring as the independent site, Lerna. Roebuck conjectured that the new construction of "the building was designed for the accommodation of visitors to the precinct, by way of compensation for the development of Lerna as an independent resort."²¹ However, such a theory is based on the false identification of the Asklepieion spring as Lerna. Thus, a more plausible interpretation for this new building's purpose is that the Asklepieion's popularity in the first century C.E. necessitated a new building to accommodate the site's numerous visitors. The necessity of this new two story building because of the god's popularity is also strengthened considerably when it is remembered that devotion to Asklepios was at its peak in the first and second centuries C.E.²² Moreover, by the early fifties C.E., Corinth was in a state of rapid growth and "was well on its way to becoming not only the largest but also the most prosperous city in all of Greece."²³ Moreover, a careful examination of the site plan indicates that the large ramp area was the only viable space suitable for constructing such an edifice. This new Roman building could have been used for additional dining rooms and/or as dormitories for visitors.

Distinctions that Roebuck made between the public/private and the sacred/secular spheres of life at the Asklepieion and its adjacent fountain complex were based largely on the spring's copious supply of water.²⁴ In short, Roebuck found it hard to believe that such a copious supply of water could be reserved for private use. However, beyond the fact that springs supplying a copious supply of water were an important cultic feature at numerous Asklepieia throughout the Greco-Roman world,²⁵ deposits of terracotta votive offerings dis-

²⁰ Roebuck, *Corinth*, 78–80.

²¹ Roebuck, *Corinth*, XIV, 80.

²² Emma Edelstein and Ludwig Edelstein, *Asclepius: A Collection and Interpretation of the Testimonies* (2 vols.; Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1945), 2:108–09, 2:255.

²³ Ben Witherington, *Conflict and Community in Corinth: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians* (Grand Rapids, MI and Carlisle: Eerdmans Publishing Company and The Paternoster Press, 1995), 5.

²⁴ Roebuck, *Corinth*, XIV, 25.

²⁵ The Asklepieia at Epidauros, Pergamon, Kos, Troizen, and Athens all had springs which were used for ritual washing and bathing prescribed by the god.

covered during excavations at the Corinthian Asklepieion in the northeast corner of the spring area (Deposit IV) and in the precinct's south colonnade (Deposit VII)²⁶ demonstrate that the entire spring complex was part of the *temenos*. These deposits establish this fact with certainty since, as Walter Burkert states, votive offerings are not buried outside of the boundaries of a *temenos*.²⁷ Therefore, it is concluded that the spring adjacent to the Asklepieion is part of the Asklepieion itself, while Lerna Fountain is to be identified with the Fountain of the Lamps.

3. *The Corinthian Asklepieion Dining Rooms and Sacrificial Meals*

As briefly mentioned earlier in this paper, there are three dining rooms that are located on the first floor of the building identified as the abaton of the Asklepieion.²⁸ The Corinthian dining rooms could be accessed from devotees above in the abaton or temple by means of a staircase or two ramps, one of which had the Roman building constructed over it in the middle of the first century C.E. mentioned previously. These dining rooms seem to have stayed in continued use throughout the Roman period.²⁹ The structural relationship and means of access between the temple, abaton, dining rooms, and spring further support the position that the Asklepieion and its spring complex should be viewed as a single site dedicated to Asklepios. The presence of dining rooms at an Asklepieion in the Greco-Roman world is not unusual; they have been found at the Asklepieia of Epidauros, Troizen, Athens, and Delos.³⁰ The three dining rooms in the Corinthian Asklepieion were each fitted with seven couches allowing eleven people to recline together at a meal in each dining room (corners: 4 couches $\times$ 2 people per couch; central walls: 3 couches $\times$ 1 person per couch), accommodating a total of thirty-three people in the three dining rooms.³¹

²⁶ Roebuck, *Corinth*, XIV, 114.

²⁷ Walter Burkert, *Greek Religion* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985), 86–87.

²⁸ Roebuck, *Corinth*, XIV, 24.

²⁹ Roebuck, *Corinth*, XIV, 55.

³⁰ R. A. Tomlinson, "Two Buildings in Sanctuaries of Asklepios," *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 89 (1969): 111.

³¹ Roebuck, *Corinth*, XIV, 55.

As in other Greco-Roman religious cults, sacrifice was the central ritual of Asklepios' cult.³² Sacrifices were offered to the god in four contexts: 1) as a public offering to the god on behalf of a city performed by its cult priests; 2) as a preparatory rite before undergoing incubation; 3) as a thank-offering to the god for a cure or remedy which the god had bestowed;³³ and 4) as apotropaic—a sacrifice done as a means of avoiding future misfortune such as illness, danger, or death.³⁴ Various kinds of food were sacrificed to Asklepios, such as meat (bull, ox, lamb, pig, she-goat, goat),³⁵ fowl (rooster, various other birds), fish,³⁶ cakes (honeycake, cheesecake), figs, and wine.³⁷ Sacrifices could be eaten by the devotees within the sanctuary, consumed by the cult priests within the sanctuary, or taken by the devotees and eaten at home.³⁸ In certain Asklepieia the removal of food from the *temenos* was forbidden, such as at Epidauros and Titane,³⁹ thus necessitating the consumption of sacrificial food on-site at such locations.

Unfortunately, there is no literary evidence available that could reveal the particularities regarding the sacrifices and meals that occurred at the Corinthian Asklepieion. There are, however, two statuary relief plaques which depict sacrifices made to Asklepios and also a number of terracotta figurines of banqueters that have been discovered at the site. One statuary relief plaque depicts a sacrifice with devotees offering a pig, cakes, and wine to Asklepios who sits

³² The assessment of Peter D. Gooch, *Dangerous Food: 1 Corinthians 8–10 in its Context* (Ontario, Canada: Canadian Corporation for Studies in Religion/Corporation Canadienne des Sciences Religieuses by Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1993), 21, that sacrifice was not the central ritual within Asklepios' cult but that still "it played a part," is refuted in my *Food Offered to Idols in Roman Corinth: A Social-Rhetorical Reconsideration of 1 Corinthians 8:1–11:1* (WUNT 2/151; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 63–67.

³³ The first three contexts are noted by Gooch, *Dangerous Food*, 21.

³⁴ Artemidoros, *Oneirokritica*, 5.66. English edition: Artemidoros, *Oneirokritica* (Translated and commentary by Robert J. White; Park Ridge, NJ: Noyes Press, 1975). See Edelstein and Edelstein, *Asclepius*, 286–89.

³⁵ At Epidauros goats were not offered in sacrifice, but they were sacrificed at Cyrene, cf. Pausanias 2.26.9. Servius, *Commentarii in Georgica*, 2.380, quoted in Edelstein and Edelstein, *Asclepius*, states that goats are not sacrificed to Asklepios because Asklepios is the god of health, while goats always have a fever.

³⁶ Fish seem to be offered to Asklepios in a sculptured relief plaque that is displayed in the museum of Ancient Corinth. They may, rather, be cakes. I have been unable to locate this plaque in any published catalogue.

³⁷ Edelstein and Edelstein, *Asclepius*, 284–311.

³⁸ Gooch, *Dangerous Food*, 22–23.

³⁹ Pausanias, 2.27.1.

at table and reaches for some of the offerings on the table with his right hand.⁴⁰ The second plaque depicts a sacrifice to Asklepios with a devotee offering a tray laden with what seems to be fish or cakes while Asklepios awaits the sacrifice as he reclines on a couch.⁴¹ The terracotta figurines of banqueters that have been found in the archaeological excavations depict diners reclining, while at least one of the figurines depicts a banqueter reclining while holding a bowl.⁴² The relief plaques and the terracotta banqueters all seem to indicate that devotees who dined in the three dining rooms believed that the dining rooms were part of the Asklepieion, that Asklepios himself shared in their sacrificial offerings, and that they dined in Asklepios' presence while reclining on the dining rooms' couches.

4. *The Misidentification of the Asklepieion Spring/Dining Rooms as Lerna Fountain, Implications for 1 Cor 8:1–11:1, and a Different Perspective*

Several New Testament scholars investigating Paul's instructions on sacrificial food in 1 Cor 8:1–11:1, most influentially Peter Gooch, followed by Derek Newton and Alex T. Cheung, have accepted de Waele's and Roebuck's misidentification of the Asklepieion's adjacent spring and dining rooms as Lerna. Consequently, they have alleged an ambiguous relationship between the Asklepieion and its spring and dining room complex that has implications for their interpretations and reconstructions of the Corinthian Christian idol-food issue.⁴³ Gooch's reconstruction regarding the Asklepieion and its dining rooms advances his thesis about a possible confusion or association

⁴⁰ The plaque depicting the pig, cake, and wine offering can be found in Mabel Lang, *Cure and Cult in Ancient Corinth: A Guide to the Asklepieion* (Princeton, New Jersey: The American School of Classical Studies at Athens, 1977), 28. Corinth Inventory Number S322. The plaque is located in the Museum of Ancient Corinth.

⁴¹ The plaque depicting the fish offering (or cakes) is located in the Museum of Ancient Corinth.

⁴² Roebuck, *Corinth*, XIV, Plate 53, nos. 13–14 and p. 140 for a description. Roebuck conveys that a number of such terracotta banqueter figurines were found at the Corinthian Asklepieion.

⁴³ Derek Newton, *Deity and Diet: The Dilemma of Sacrificial Food at Corinth* (JSNT Suppl. 169; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 96–99; Alex T. Cheung, *Idol Food in Corinth: An Examination of Paul's Approach in the Light of its Background in Ancient Judaism and Legacy in Early Christianity* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 29–31.

between the Asklepion and the adjacent fountain by certain Weak Christians, while other Strong Christians may have defended the separation and distinctiveness of the two sites.⁴⁴ Gooch argues that the dual identity of Lerna (i.e. the Asklepion spring/dining room complex) as a public fountain, yet adjacent to the Asklepion, would cause confusion to some Christians about the nature of the food that was being consumed in the dining rooms and the acceptability of dining there.⁴⁵ Gooch writes:

the question of whether eating in the dining rooms of Lerna was “reclining in an idol’s temple” (1 Cor 8:10) or “sharing the table of *daimonia*” (1 Cor 10:21) has no unqualified answer. Further, it could not be determined simply from the setting whether or not what one ate in the dining rooms of Lerna had been offered to Asklepios or another God.⁴⁶

Gooch concludes:

Thus some of the food some of the time could be called *eidolothyton* (“offered to idols”). On the other hand, it is likely that not all of the food prepared for diners in the rooms of Lerna stood in such a relation to the cult of Asklepios. It seems reasonable to speculate that a group of diners could request particular foods, and, if so desired, request food without a history of sacred use.⁴⁷

Derek Newton and Alex T. Cheung, influenced by Gooch’s research, also follow a similar line of argument for their social-historical reconstructions of 1 Cor 8:1–11:1. Newton writes, “The dining rooms, located between the temple precinct and the Lerna precinct, thus remain somewhat ambiguous in function, perhaps ‘religious’, perhaps ‘secular’.”⁴⁸ Cheung argues similarly:

The association between food and cultus was not always so plain in Paul’s Corinth. For example, the dining rooms of Lerna stood in a very ambiguous relationship with the adjacent Sanctuary of Asklepios. It is clear that the association of the dining rooms of Lerna with the cultus of Asklepios is quantitatively different from that of the dining rooms in the Sanctuary of Demeter with that cultus.⁴⁹

⁴⁴ Gooch, *Dangerous Food*, 25–26.

⁴⁵ Gooch, *Dangerous Food*, 26.

⁴⁶ Gooch, *Dangerous Food*, 25.

⁴⁷ Gooch, *Dangerous Food*, 26.

⁴⁸ Newton, *Deity and Diet*, 97.

⁴⁹ Cheung, *Idol Food in Corinth*, 29. Unfortunately, Cheung not only errs in following Gooch’s assessment regarding the Asklepion and its adjacent spring, but

Cheung goes even further in his assessment, asserting that the dining rooms were neither “architecturally nor functionally related to the Sanctuary, they were probably a mere extension of the recreational function of the fountain of Lerna.”⁵⁰

These New Testament scholars are not the first to have postulated a public function for the fountain adjacent to the Asklepieion and, thus, an ambiguous relationship to the cult of Asklepios—although Gooch does seem to have been the first to significantly develop this idea in his monograph which reconstructs the Corinthian idol-food issue. Rather, Jerome Murphy O’Connor seems to have been the earliest New Testament scholar to suggest that the fountain complex adjacent to the Asklepieion had a public function unrelated to Asklepios’ cult.⁵¹ Murphy O’Connor’s identification of the public function of the fountain and dining rooms adjacent to the Asklepieion enables him to reconstruct a hypothetical scenario in which a casual Christian visitor to the spring (a Weak Christian) could be seen by happenstance by Strong Christians who were banqueting in the complex’s dining rooms, and the visitor could be subsequently invited to dine with the Strong at their meal. Murphy O’Connor’s evaluation and reconstruction of the fountain and dining rooms public and social functions have also been adopted by Anthony C. Thiselton in his exegesis of 1 Cor 8:1–11:1 in Thiselton’s monumental commentary.⁵² However, such hypothetical scenarios do not comport with the structural and functional relationship of the Asklepieion with its spring and dining rooms as a unified site.

The Corinthian Christians’ alleged confusion about whether the food served in the adjacent dining rooms was previously offered in sacrifice—based on the ambiguous association between the Asklepieion and the spring/dining rooms due to the accidental proximity of the

also errs by accepting Gooch’s assertions about the Sanctuary of Demeter as a site of Corinthian Christian idol-food consumption. The dining rooms at the Sanctuary of Demeter did not function at the time of 1 Corinthians’ composition but had been covered over and became a repository for curse tablets. For more on the dining rooms of the Sanctuary of Demeter, see my examination of them and critique of Gooch’s position in my *Food Offered to Idols*, 71–92.

⁵⁰ Cheung, *Idol Food*, 29.

⁵¹ Jerome Murphy O’Connor, *St. Paul’s Corinth: Texts and Archaeology* (Wilmington, Delaware: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1983), 38; 170

⁵² Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (The New International Greek Testament Commentary; Grand Rapids and Cambridge, U.K.: Eerdmans Publishing Company and Paternoster Press, 2000), 618–19.

two sites—is untenable for several reasons. The sum of the evidence indicates, contrary to Cheung’s assertion, that Asklepios’ sanctuary and its spring/dining room complex were indisputably connected to each other, architecturally and functionally by conception, construction, access, and ritual practice. This architectural connection is even more convincing when it is remembered that the dining rooms are located on the first floor of the abaton building of the Asklepieion.⁵³ It is not correct to assert, as these scholars do, that the Asklepieion and its adjacent spring complex could be merely associated or confused by the unknowing Corinthian Christian, as well as defended by those Strong Christians who were better informed about the spring complex’s supposed true, independent identity from the Asklepieion. Rather, the entire site has been shown to be part of Asklepios’ *temenos*, while the statuary relief plaques of sacrificial dining at the Asklepieion and the terracotta figurines of banqueters indicate that those who ate meals in the dining rooms considered them to be part of Asklepios’ sacred precinct. It seems especially significant that none of the New Testament scholars mentioned above seems to be aware of the existence of the Fountain of the Lamps and its identification as Lerna, rather than that of the Asklepieion spring.

Gooch’s suggestion that food “without a history of sacred use”⁵⁴ could be requested for meals in the dining rooms is not probable since the dining rooms are located within the *temenos*. Such dining rooms within the *temenos* would not be able to have a special storage of food for serving that did not have a sacred history. Moreover, what group in Corinth, other than possibly a few newly converted Gentile Christians, would be interested in requesting food without a sacred history at the Asklepieion’s dining rooms? Sacrificial meat from the numerous sacrifices that were offered daily at the Asklepieion, especially those that devotees had themselves offered, as well as other sacrificial offerings such as cakes, produce, wine, and possibly fish would have been readily available for diners. Clearly the Corinthian Christians would understand the meals served in the Corinthian Asklepieion to consist of sacrificial food. Thus, eating in these dining rooms would meet Paul’s description of “reclining in an idol’s temple” (8:10) and thus qualify the site as a location where Paul would have considered the food to be “food offered to idols” (8:1).

⁵³ Roebuck, *Corinth*, XIV, 24.

⁵⁴ Gooch, *Dangerous Food*, 26.

Moreover, the Corinthian Christians whom Paul refutes for eating in an idol's temple do not deny this practice or attempt to explain their innocence based on a confusion between the Asklepieion and its adjacent spring/dining room complex as the aforementioned scholars describe as a scenario. On the contrary, in the Corinthians' letter to Paul (cf. 1 Cor 7:1), which Paul seems to quote in 1 Cor 8:1b, 8:4b–5a, 8:6, 8:8, 10:23a, and 10:23c, they present reasons why they can knowingly eat sacrificial food with impunity.⁵⁵ They argue that they “all have knowledge” that “no idol exists in the world,” that “no God exists but one,” and that “for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and there is one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.” They further assert that “food will not bring us before the judgment of God” and that “we are worse off if we do not eat, and we are better off if we eat.” They do not attempt to explain their dining practices by noting a separation or confusion between the Asklepieion and its adjacent spring/dining rooms as these scholars suggest, but the Corinthian Strong state that their practice of eating in an idol's temple is justified by their knowledge that pagan gods have no real existence, that they do not come under God's judgment for eating idol-food, and that there are negative social consequences for abstaining from it, as well as social benefits for eating it.

Conclusion

The Asklepieion and its adjacent spring/dining room complex are to be identified as a unified site—that of the Corinthian Asklepieion. De Waele and Roebuck's identification of the Asklepieion spring/dining room complex as Lerna is somewhat understandable based on Pausanias' description of the site—if not a bit forced—and because they did not have the benefit of the Fountain of the Lamp's discovery, a site which precisely meets Pausanias' description of Lerna Fountain

⁵⁵ It seems that the Corinthians' letter to Paul does not represent the sentiments of the entire Corinthian assembly, but primarily that of the Corinthian “Strong.” This seems to be especially the case regarding the issue of sacrificial food. For quotations of the Corinthian Strong embedded in 1 Cor 8:1–9, see my “Arguments Concerning Food Offered to Idols: Corinthian Quotations and Pauline Refutations in a Rhetorical *Partitio* (1 Corinthians 8:1–9),” *CBQ* 67.4 (2005): 611–631.

and is located just two-hundred meters away from the Asklepieion. Nevertheless, de Waele and Roebuck's misidentification of the Asklepieion spring/dining room complex as Lerna has been followed by many New Testament scholars, including some doing detailed studies of the Corinthian idol-food issue. This misidentification has led to reconstructions alleging the Corinthian Christians' confusion between the Asklepieion and Lerna (i.e. the Asklepieion spring/dining room complex) and the nature of the food served at formal meals hosted there. However, a reexamination of the archaeological evidence demonstrates that the spring/dining room complex were part of the Asklepieion and that Lerna is to be identified with the Fountain of the Lamps. Thus, all formal meals occurring in the Asklepieion's dining rooms would have served sacrificial food featured in the cult of Asklepios—the only food appropriate for consumption inside this sacred *temenos*. Thus, the Asklepieion's dining rooms are a very probable location in which Corinthian Christians could have eaten food offered to a pagan god when reclining in an "idol's temple," such as Paul describes in his instructions on sacrificial food in 1 Cor 8:1–11:1.

‘NOT EVEN AMONG THE PAGANS’ (1 COR 5:1):
PAUL AND SENECA ON INCEST

Paul Hartog

In 1 Corinthians 5:1, Paul addressed a specific case of πορνεία, in which a man was having sexual relations with his ‘father’s wife.’¹ Paul asserts that such sexual immorality was not even found (or tolerated) among the pagans. Many commentators note the banning of such incest in the Hebrew Scriptures, Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Josephus, Philo, and rabbinic writings. These Jewish parallels, however, do not fully illustrate the point of the Pauline text (a Gentile aversion to incest). Some scholars note the prohibitions of incest in Roman law, citing regulations found in the Augustan *lex Julia* and Gaius’ *Institutes*. Others refer to various incestuous examples in Greco-Roman literature, especially Cicero’s *Pro Cluentio*. Unfortunately, the scholars who cite such parallels usually list them, without explaining whether the cases concern mothers, stepmothers, or mothers-in-law; or whether they involve incestuous marriage or incestuous adultery. Furthermore, no scholar (to my knowledge) mentions an interesting parallel found in Seneca’s *Phaedra*, 165–173. Phaedra is smitten with her stepson, Hippolytus, but her nurse reminds her that such incest is not even practiced among the ‘barbarian’ tribes beyond civilized culture. This Senecan parallel illustrates Paul’s technique of rhetorical ‘boundary maintenance’ (rather than an emphasis on precise illegality). Moreover, the parallel counters M. Pascuzzi’s theory that 1 Corinthians 5 is a reaction to Stoic-influenced opponents, and it may also assist in an exegetical question concerning 5:1.

Scholars generally agree that 1 Corinthians 5:1 is referring to a stepmother rather than a biological mother.² Paul does not explicate

¹ I wish to thank David E. Aune for his gracious role as my doctoral mentor, for his personal concern and attention, and for his erudite instruction in the Greco-Roman context of the New Testament.

² De Vos asserts that the woman in 1 Cor 5 was the (deceased) father’s concubine (C. S. De Vos, “Stepmother, Concubines and the Case of πορνεία in 1 Corinthians 5,” *NTS* 44 [1998]: 104–114). But Lev 18:7–8 differentiates between incest with a ‘mother’ and with a ‘father’s wife/stepmother’ (γυναικὸς πατρός in the LXX). In

the status of the father (whether he was dead or living) or the consequent status of the marriage between stepmother and father (married, separated, divorced, or annulled by death).³ The use and context of the present infinitive ἔχειν suggests an ongoing sexual relationship rather than a one-time or temporary indiscretion (5:1). The verb is often used of ‘having’ a wife in marriage (1 Cor 7:2, 12, 29; Mark 6:17–18; Luke 20:28, 33; cf. Matt 14:4; 22:28), but ἔχειν can also be used in non-marital situations (John 4:18).⁴ The phrase ὁ τὸ ἔργον τοῦτο πράξας may point to an act of marriage (1 Cor 5:2), although many scholars interpret it as a ‘constative aorist’ that summarizes the continuing illicit relationship as a single reality.

The apostle rhetorically attempts to startle the Corinthian believers through a shameful contrast, a form of proof by πάθος.⁵ He refers to the specific case of πορνεία with the elliptical phrase καὶ τοιαύτη πορνεία ἥτις οὐδὲ ἔν τοις ἔθνεσιν: “and of such kind of sexual immorality which not even among the pagans.”⁶ Paul reserves his real dismay for the entire congregation (1 Cor 5:2). He recommends that the stepson should be removed (ἄρθῃ) from the fellowship (5:2);⁷ ‘such a man’ should be ‘handed over to Satan’ (5:5); the ‘leaven’ should be ‘purged out’ (ἐκκαθάρατε) (5:7); the ‘evildoer’ should be ‘driven out’ (ἐξάρατε) (5:13).

Paul’s time, a man would often marry a much younger woman as a second wife, and so she and a stepson might be rather close in age. For a discussion of classical stepmothers, see P. A. Watson, *Ancient Stepmothers: Myth, Misogyny and Reality* (Leiden: Brill, 1995).

³ Clarke argues that the father had either died or the pair had become divorced, and he reconstructs an incestuous marriage with financial motivation (A. D. Clarke, *Secular and Christian Leadership in Corinth* [Leiden: Brill, 1993], 84–85); Winter counters that the father and stepmother were probably still married, which would involve the more serious crime of incestuous adultery (B. W. Winter, *After Paul Left Corinth* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001], 45–49).

⁴ In Mark 6:17–18, ἔχειν γυναῖκα is interchangeable with γαμεῖν. Enslin notes that in 1 Cor 5:1, the word γυναῖκα does not refer to the woman’s connection to the son, but to her former husband (M. S. Enslin, *The Ethics of Paul* [New York: Abingdon, 1957], 149 n. 59). But γυναῖκα still serves as the object of ἔχειν. The unusual placing of τινά between γυναῖκά and τοῦ πατρὸς emphasizes the ignominious nature of the relationship.

⁵ A good discussion of Paul’s rhetorical strategy in 1 Cor 5:1 is found in M. Pascuzzi, *Ethics, Ecclesiology, and Church Discipline* (Rome: Editrice Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 1997), 101–109.

⁶ Cf. the contrast between believers and the ἔθνη in 1 Cor 12:2. Paul uses pagan sexual conduct as a motivating contrast in 1 Thess 4:3–5.

⁷ Most scholars agree that the stepmother was not a member of the Corinthian assembly, because Paul does not stipulate any discipline in her case.

1. *Cited Jewish Parallels*

A. C. Thiselton notes that ‘modern writers unanimously cite’ passages from the Torah that illustrate 1 Corinthians 5:1.⁸ Paul himself closes this section (5:13) with a citation of Deuteronomy (Deut 13:5 <MT 13:6>; 17:7; 19:19; 21:21; 22:21, 24; 24:7).⁹ The Torah condemned sexual relations between a stepson and stepmother in Leviticus 18:8, as well as son and mother in 18:7. These censures fall within a list of fourteen prohibited relationships (18:6–20) that applied to both Jews and resident aliens (18:26). Violators were to be ‘cut off’ from the people (18:29). The Law also condemned relations between stepmother and stepson in Lev 20:11 (cf. 20:14); Deut 22:30 (MT 23:1); 27:20 (cf. 27:23).

The Hebrew Scriptures refer to a few cases of similar incest. Reuben was condemned for taking Jacob’s concubine Bilhah while his father was still living (Gen 35:22; 49:4; cf. 1 Chr 5:1). Absalom had sexual relations with David’s concubines in an attempt to publicly shame his father (2 Sam 16:20–22; cf. 2 Sam 20:3). Solomon had Adonijah killed when he asked for Abishag, who had warmed their elderly father David in bed (1 Kgs 1:1–4; 2:13–25). Ezekiel 22:10–11 condemns residents of Jerusalem who ‘dishonor their father’s bed.’ Amos 2:7 censures the profanation of God’s holy name manifested by both father and son having relations with the same young woman.¹⁰

Some scholars cite later Jewish materials, including the *Letter of Aristeas* 152, which castigates Gentiles who ‘even defile mothers and daughters.’ *Jubilees* 33.1–9 recounts the sin of Reuben, and 33.10–14 reiterates the prohibitions of incest as found in the Torah. *Jubilees* adds that those who commit such a ‘despicable’ and ‘polluted’ deed should not live another day but should be stoned, since no forgiveness is available (33.13; cf. 33.10). Pseudo-Phocylides commands, “Touch not your stepmother, your father’s second wife; but honor her as a mother, because she follows the footsteps of your mother. Do not have intercourse with the concubines of your father.”¹¹ The

⁸ A. C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 386.

⁹ B. S. Rosner, *Paul, Scripture, & Ethics* (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 61–63.

¹⁰ According to the LXX and the Vulgate, Caleb had a son by his father’s widow (1 Chr 2:24).

¹¹ Translation in P. W. van der Horst, *The Sentences of Pseudo-Phocylides* (Leiden: Brill, 1978), 99. See van der Horst’s discussion of incest prohibitions on pages 229–230.

Sibylline Oracles condemn the Romans for unlawfully allowing mothers to have intercourse with their sons (5.390–393). The *Testament of Reuben* counsels its readers not to fall into the sexual sins of Reuben, who had relations with his father's concubine. The Qumran *Temple Scroll* also forbids sleeping with a father's wife (11QT 66.12).

Philo describes the Mosaic prohibition of intercourse with a mother or with a father's wife, and he contrasts it with Persian and Greek violations of the incest taboo (*On the Special Laws* III.13–21, 26). Philo wonders "what unholiness could be more impious" than shamefully defiling a father's bed (III.14). Josephus labels intercourse with one's mother as 'the greatest evil,' and intercourse with a stepmother as an 'alien' and 'outrageous crime' (*Jewish Antiquities*, 3.274–275).

Some commentators list assorted rabbinic parallels. The Mishnah (*m. Sanhedrin* 7.4) declares that those who commit incest with a mother or a stepmother deserve to be stoned. Incest with a mother-in-law was punishable by burning according to *m. Sanhedrin* 9.1. The list of thirty-six transgressions subject to 'extirpation' (being 'cut off' from the people) in *m. Kerithot* 1.1 includes incest with a mother or stepmother. These two relations are repeated in a list of six forbidden degrees in *m. Yebamot* 1.3 (cf. *b. Yebamot* 13a). One's mother-in-law is also listed in *m. Yebamot* 1.1.¹² The penalty of stoning (in cases of a mother or stepmother) remained even after the father's death (*b. Sanhedrin* 54a). According to a disputed rabbinic tradition, Amon committed incest with his own mother (*b. Sanhedrin* 103b). *Y. Sanhedrin* 7.6 and *t. Sanhedrin* 10.1–2 echo the prohibition of incest with a mother or a father's wife.¹³

C. K. Barrett suggests that 1 Corinthians 5:1 possibly alludes to the 'Noachide decrees' of rabbinic tradition that defined the minimum moral requirements placed upon Gentiles.¹⁴ Following Strack and Billerbeck, several scholars have asserted that some rabbis allowed proselytes to marry a stepmother, since former relations ceased in

¹² Also in *b. Yebamot* 2a; but cf. *b. Yebamot* 21a. *M. Yebamot* 11.1 forbids a man to marry a woman who has been raped or seduced by his father (cf. *t. Sanhedrin* 10.2). See also G. G. Porton, *The Traditions of Rabbi Ishmael* (3 vols; Leiden: Brill, 1979), 1:98–101; *y. Yebamot* 1.1.

¹³ See Porton, *Traditions*, 3:96–99.

¹⁴ C. K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians* (London: Black, 1968), 121. Tomson lists rabbinic materials relating incest to the Noachide rules (P. J. Tomson, *Paul and the Jewish Law* [Assen: Van Gorcum, 1990], 99).

the new life received at conversion.¹⁵ P. J. Tomson, however, has questioned this reading of the evidence.¹⁶

2. Cited Parallels from Roman Law

These Jewish writings are helpful in that they clearly demonstrate Jewish condemnation of incest. But the point of 1 Corinthians 5:1 lies elsewhere: ‘not even among the pagans.’¹⁷ Commentaries have noted that such relations were not only shameful in pagan society but also illegal. They frequently cite the *Institutes* of Gaius, a second-century Roman jurist.

Marriage cannot be contracted between people in the relations of parent and child, nor does the capacity to enter a Roman law marriage exist between them—for instance, father and daughter, or mother and son . . . A union within these degrees is evil and incestuous. If their relationship as parent and child is based on adoption, they still cannot marry; . . . Again, I may not marry a woman who was previously my mother-in-law or daughter-in-law or step-daughter or step-mother (1.59–63).¹⁸

Several New Testament scholars also cite the Augustan *lex Julia de adulteries coercentis* (18 B.C.E.).¹⁹ The main thrust of the law probably applied to incest in the form of extra-marital adultery rather than

¹⁵ H. L. Strack and P. Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch* III (Münich: Beck'sche, 1965), 353–358; cf. *b. Yebamot* 97–98; *b. Sanhedrin* 57–58. See also D. Daube, “Pauline Contributions to a Pluralistic Culture: Recreation and Beyond,” in *Jesus and Man's Hope* (vol. 2; Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, 1971): 223–245.

¹⁶ Tomson, *Paul*, 100–101; see also De Vos, “Stepmothers,” 107.

¹⁷ A. Lindemann, *Der Erste Korintherbrief* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000), 123. This is not to say that 1 Cor 5:1–13 does not use and echo the Hebrew Scriptures, but only that the phrase ‘not even among the pagans’ stresses Gentile aversion (cf. 5:13; Rosner, *Paul*, 62). Censures of Jewish immorality as being worse than that of the neighboring Gentiles are found in 2 Kgs 21:9–11; Ezek 16:47–58; Amos 1–2, 1 Macc 7:23. For a full discussion of echoes from the Hebrew Scriptures in 1 Cor 5:1–13, see Rosner, *Paul*, 61–93. C. K. Robertson argues that much of 1 Cor 5 echoes Ezek 16 (C. K. Robertson, *Conflict in Corinth* [New York: Peter Lang, 2001], 186).

¹⁸ Translation from *The Institutes of Gaius*, trans. with an introduction by W. M. Gordon and O. F. Robinson (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988).

¹⁹ For overviews of the *lex Julia*, see T. A. J. McGinn, *Prostitution, Sexuality, and the Law in Ancient Rome* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 140–215; S. Treggiari, *Roman Marriage* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 277–290. Treggiari discusses Roman laws on incestuous marriage on pp. 37–39.

incestuous marriage.²⁰ “It has been decided that the penalty for incest, which in case of a man is deportation to an island, shall not be inflicted upon the woman; that is to say when she has not been convicted under the *lex Julia* concerning adultery” (*Pauli Sententiae* 2.26).²¹ On the other hand, the *Digest* states, “If adultery be committed along with incest, as, for example, [by a man] with his stepdaughter, daughter-in-law, or stepmother, the woman also will suffer a similar punishment” (48.5.39 <Papinian>).²² The *Digest* describes various causes for leniency in the application of the law. A woman could be excused for committing incest against ‘our law’ (*ius nostri*), but not against ‘the law of nations’ (*ius gentium*) (48.5.39.2). The latter may refer to incest between ascendant and descendant or between primary kin (almost universally banned by custom), while the former may refer to further degrees of prohibition in Roman law (the *ius civile*).²³

Papinian also notes a second-century rescript that declared “after a divorce, [following a marriage] which a stepson had made in good faith with his stepmother, a charge of incest should not be allowed” (*Digest* 48.5.39.5). On the other hand, in the case of incest between a mother-in-law and son-in-law in which the mother-in-law died, the son-in-law could still be charged, as in a case of adultery (48.5.45). When a charge of incest was combined with adultery, it was excluded from a five-year statute of limitation (48.5.40.5).²⁴

In the case of incestuous marriage, the *Digest* prohibits marriage between a man and his mother, between a man and the wife of his adoptive father, between a man and his own mother, between a man and a woman who had been in *contubernium* with his father, between a man and the mother of his own partner in *contubernium*, between a man and any of his father’s wives, and between

²⁰ Winter, *After Paul*, 46–47; O. F. Robinson, *The Criminal Law of Ancient Rome* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 54, 56; Treggiari, *Roman Women*, 281. Scholarly debate has surrounded the relationship between the *lex Julia* and incest (see McGinn, *Prostitution*, 140–147, esp. 140 n. 2).

²¹ Translation in Clarke, *Secular and Christian Leadership*, 78. Although this source is postclassical, the prescribed penalties are usually accepted as coming from the Augustan law (McGinn, *Prostitution*, 142 n. 23). For a description of penalties under the *lex Julia*, see Robinson *Criminal Law*, 66–67.

²² *Digest* translations come from A. Watson, *The Digest of Justinian* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985).

²³ J. F. Gardner, *Women in Roman Law & Society* (London: Croom Helm, 1986), 126; Treggiari, *Roman Marriage*, 281; Robinson, *Criminal Law*, 56; P. E. Corbett, *The Roman Law of Marriage* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1930), 50–51.

²⁴ See also Winter, *After Paul*, 46.

a man and the mother of someone betrothed to him (23.2.53 <Gaius>; 23.2.14 <Paul>).²⁵ It further prohibits marriage between a freedman and his freedwoman mother (23.2.8 <Pomponius>) and between a man and a woman betrothed to his father (23.2.12 <Ulpian>). A woman who was a concubine of a man was not to become the concubine of his son. "I do not think she is behaving properly, since a relationship of this kind is almost criminal" (25.7.1.3 <Ulpian>). Punishment was to fall more severely upon those who secretly contracted incestuous marriages than upon those who did so openly (23.2.68 <Paul>). The *Digest* also includes the case of a father who discovered that his wife was sleeping with his son (his wife's stepson). Hadrian deported this father after he killed his son while hunting. Hadrian's rationale was that the father acted more like a savage 'bandit' than a father (48.9.5 <Marcian>).

B. Winter also includes a footnote which indirectly leads one to an edict of Diocletian, Maximian, and their caesars (295 C.E.), as found in the *Mosaicarum et Romanarum Legum Collatio*.²⁶ The edict classed marriage with either a mother or stepmother or mother-in-law among 'nefarious crimes,' since such unions defied both 'wise religion' and 'the observation of modesty' (VI.4.3–6). Those who had contracted incestuous marriages in the past, either through 'inexperience' or 'ignorance' based upon barbaric custom, were granted clemency. Nevertheless, "they should be thankful that even their life has been allowed them" (VI.4.3).²⁷ The *Rules* of Ulpian (5.6–7) and the later *Institutes* of Justinian (I.10.1–7) banned marriages with a mother (even if the relationship was based on adoption), a stepmother, or a mother-in-law.

3. Cited Parallels from Greco-Roman Literature

The most frequently cited literary parallel is Cicero's *Pro Cluentio* (first century B.C.E.). Cicero expresses horror at the marriage of Cluentius' mother Sassia to a former son-in-law named Melinus. Cicero refers

²⁵ In a case of *contubernium*, the legal capacity for Roman marriage (*conubium*) was lacking, because at least one of the partners was a slave. Winter is the lone commentator to cite the *Digest* 23.2.14 (Winter, *After Paul*, 46 n. 13), and he does not refer to the other relevant texts in *Digest* 23.2.

²⁶ Winter, *After Paul*, 50 n. 29.

²⁷ Translation in J. E. Grubbs, *Women and the Law in the Roman Empire* (London: Routledge, 2002), 142.

to 'the outrageous passion' of the 'unnatural woman,' which involved 'not only dishonour, but crime' (5.12). Sassia's passion "was undeterred by considerations of honour, of modesty or of natural feeling; or family disgrace, or public scandal" (5.12).

Oh! To think of the woman's sin, unbelievable, unheard of in all experience save for this single instance! To think of her wicked passion, unbridled, untamed! . . . The madness of passion broke through and laid low every obstacle: lust triumphed over modesty, wantonness over scruple, madness over sense (5.14–6.15).²⁸

Some commentaries have also gathered assorted parallels from Greco-Roman literature. Among early sources, the Greek orator Andocides (c. 400 B.C.E.) speaks of a certain Callias, the 'most wretched among men,' who was living with his wife's mother (*On the Mysteries* 124–129). Andocides rhetorically asks whether such a deed had ever been committed among the Greeks before. Plato refers to the incest prohibition (including intercourse between parents and children) as νομός ἄγραφος or 'unwritten law' (*Laws* 838A–839A). Valerius Maximus' *Memorable Deeds and Sayings* 5.9.1 tells the story of Gellius (son of the consul of 72 B.C.E.), who was suspected of committing adultery with his stepmother and then plotting his father's murder. Catullus probably refers to the incestuous dalliances of this same Gellius in *Poems* 74, 88–90. Diodorus of Sicily (first century B.C.E.) speaks of one man taunting another on account of adultery with his stepmother without his father's knowledge (XX.33.5).

Among writers of the first and early second centuries C.E., Martial ridicules a Gallus who reportedly had sexual relations with his stepmother while his father was still alive (*Epigrams* 4.16). After the father's death, the two lived openly together. The Latin satirist Juvenal refers to love potions, erotic poetry, and amorous brews given to stepsons (*Satires* 6.133–134). Tacitus includes an account of a divorced mother who developed an unnatural passion for her own son, driving him to suicide. She was exiled for ten years in order to protect the younger son (*Annals* 6.49). Quintus Curtius Rufus includes a reference to the satrap Sisimithres, who had two sons born of his own mother, an incestuous liaison that was lawful in Sogdiana (*History of Alexander* VIII.2.19). Plutarch (d. 120s C.E.) relates the marriage of Antiochus to his stepmother Stratonice, who had been the second

²⁸ Translations from H. G. Hodge, *Cicero: The Speeches* (London: Heinemann, 1927), 235–237.

wife of his father Seleucus (*Demetrius* 38). Seleucus himself arranged the marriage out of fatherly concern for his lovesick son (cf. Appian, *Roman History*, XI.10.59–61).

Among later authors, Apuleius tells a folktale of a stepmother who was “more excellent in beauty than honesty” and who fell in love with her stepson (*Metamorphoses* 10.2–12). She burned with ‘insane fire’ and longed to commit ‘so extreme a disgrace,’ ‘a wicked and abominable crime.’ Artemidorus (also mid/late second century C.E.) refers to a painter who dreamed he had intercourse with his stepmother and then mistreated his father in real life (*On the Interpretation of Dreams* IV.20). Aelian (d. 230s C.E.) uses the example of camels to teach a moral lesson (*Nature of Animals* 3.47). A camel that was unwittingly forced to copulate with its mother reportedly bit, trampled, and killed the camel herder before throwing itself over a precipice. Iamblichus notes that the Pythagoreans prohibited sexual activity with mothers, daughters, and sisters (*On the Pythagorean Life* 31.210). The *Historia Augusta* relates that Caracalla had a relationship with Julia Domna, whom it mistakes as his stepmother rather than mother (X.1–4), but the information is considered historically unreliable.²⁹

Of course, some commentaries note Oedipus’ inadvertent and tragic relationship with his own mother. Several scholars cite the attempt of a stepmother to seduce her stepson in another Greek tragedy, Euripides’ *Hippolytus*. Hippolytus responds to the nurse’s disclosure of his stepmother’s incestuous desires: “I shall wash my ears clean and wipe away the pollution of your words with water from the running streams. How could I give way to sin when even to hear such things makes me feel impure (654–655)?”³⁰ The study of the early church by E. von Dobschütz lists a few other minor parallels to 1 Corinthians 5:1,³¹ and M. Lattke’s article on the verse adds various examples of Persian mother-son incest.³²

²⁹ Various fourth- and fifth-century writers repeated the rumor. See E. von Dobschütz, *Christian Life in the Primitive Church* (London: Williams & Norgate, 1904), 389.

³⁰ Translation in J. Morwood (trans. and ed.), *Euripides: Medea, Hippolytus, Electra, Helen* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998). Cf. the references to ‘pollution’ in line 317, ‘horrors’ in lines 498 and 605, ‘shameful words’ in lines 499 and 692, ‘shameful things’ in line 505, and ‘shameful deeds’ in line 721. See C. Segal, “Shame and Purity in Euripides’ *Hippolytus*,” *Hermes* 98 (1970): 278–299.

³¹ Von Dobschütz, *Christian Life*, 387–392. He adds (when cited in standard form): Homer, *Iliad*, 9.447–461; Virgil, *Aeneid*, 10.388–389 (and Servius’ commentary); the *Clementine Recognitions* 9.20; the *Clementine Homilies* 5.18; Sextus Empiricus, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism* 1.151; idem, *Against the Ethicists*, 11.186–188; Julian, *Against the Galileans* I.44B.

³² M. Lattke, “Verfluchter Inzest: War der ‘Pornos’ von 1 Kor 5 ein persischer

4. *An Uncited Parallel: Seneca, Phaedra 165–173*

To my knowledge, no commentator on 1 Corinthians 5:1 refers to an illuminating passage in Seneca's *Phaedra*, 165–173.³³ Seneca the Younger was a contemporary of the Apostle Paul, a Stoic philosopher, an adviser to Nero, and a tragedian. This particular work portrays the tragic results of Phaedra's irrational passion for her stepson, Hippolytus. Although Seneca's drama is a reworking of Euripides' *Hippolytus*, this specific passage (165–173) has no counterpart in the Euripidean version.³⁴

Upon learning of Phaedra's illicit desire, her nurse attempts to reason her out of it. The nurse reminds Phaedra that she is the 'wife of Theseus' (129; cf. 244), and she implores, "Quickly drive out the wicked thoughts from your chaste heart" (130). She condemns Phaedra's raging passion for 'so great a crime' of 'wicked intercourse and debauchery' (151, 160).³⁵ The nurse concedes that some women have committed incest and have never been caught or punished, but she insists that the guilty and fearful conscience is also a form of punishment (159–163). "Some have sinned free of calamity, but none free of fear" (164). The nurse continues by appealing to Phaedra's sense of honor and shame:

'Magos?'," in *Peregrina Curiositas* (ed. A. Kessler, T. Ricklin, and G. Wurst; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1994), 29–55. Lattke even maintains the (unlikely) possibility that a pair of Persian magi lie behind 1 Cor 5:1. Van der Horst, *Sentences*, 230 cites astrological explanations of mother-son incest in pseudo-Manetho, *Apotelesmatika* I.113; II.189f; cf. V.205; VI.196. Further classical examples of the 'amorous stepmother' figure are gathered and discussed in Watson, *Ancient Stepmothers*. Talbert comments, "That pagans used the charge of incest to discredit the Christians also indicates its disapproval by the general public" (C. H. Talbert, *Reading Corinthians* [New York, Crossroad, 1987], 13–14). Talbert gathers a list of such examples, and one could add the accusation of 'Oedipean intercourse' in *The Letter of Lyons and Vienne* (Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* V.1.14).

³³ Almost all of the available commentaries have been consulted for the parallel. J. N. Sevenster's monograph (J. N. Sevenster, *Paul and Seneca* [NovTSup 4; Leiden: Brill, 1961]), which concentrated on Seneca's moral epistles and moral essays, did not note this parallel either. Allo and Enslin mention the dramatic character of Phaedra as found in tragedies but do not refer to any specific text (E. P. Allo, *Saint Paul: Première Épître aux Corinthiens* [Paris: Librairie Lecoffre, 1956], 118; Enslin, *Ethics*, 150).

³⁴ For a description of the various 'amorous stepmother' myths, see Watson, *Ancient Stepmothers*, 234–238.

³⁵ When Phaedra informs Hippolytus of her desire, he shudders at the shamefulfulness (687–689) and impurity (704–705).

Compesce amoris impii flammās, precor, nefasque quod non ulla tellus barbara commisit unquam, non vagi campis Getae nec inhospitalis Taurus aut sparsus Scythes; expelle facinus mente castifica horridum memorque matris metue concubitus novos. Miscere thalamos patris et nati apparatus uteroque prolem capere confusam impio? Perge et nefandis verte naturam ignibus.

Quench the fires of unfaithful love, I beg, and a sin which no barbaric land has ever committed, not the Getae wandering on the plains, neither the inhospitable Taurians nor the scattered Scythians. Expel this horrible outrage from your chaste mind and, remembering your mother, fear novel matings. Do you propose to interchange the beds of father and son, and to take in mongrel progeny in an unfaithful womb? Go on and upset nature with your wicked fires (165–173).

The nurse tries to marginalize this incestuous desire by placing it outside the boundaries of not only ‘civilized’ but also ‘barbaric’ culture. To buttress her argument, she mentions three specific tribes that avoid such intercourse. The ‘Getae’ were a Thracian tribe on the lower Danube and a paradigm of barbarity. ‘Taurians’ may refer to the ancient inhabitants of modern Crimea, who were infamous for sacrificing strangers to their goddess.³⁶ The ‘Scythians’ were nomadic peoples commonly portrayed as an epitome of ‘otherness’ and barbaric practices. In all three instances, the nurse emphasizes the lack of civilized structure in these groups. The Getae are described as ‘wandering on the plains,’ the Taurians as ‘inhospitable,’³⁷ and the Scythians as ‘scattered.’ Furthermore, the nurse reminds Phaedra that her desire is not only contrary to civilized culture but also to ‘nature’ (173).³⁸

I am not arguing for any direct dependence of Paul upon Seneca. But I do believe Seneca’s *Phaedra* can provide some interpretive help in the case of 1 Corinthians 5:1. First, Paul’s phrase ἥτις οὐδὲ ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν is elliptically missing a verb.³⁹ Translators disagree whether

³⁶ See A. J. Boyle, *Seneca’s Phaedra* (Liverpool: Francis Cairns, 1987), 147; Euripides, *Iphigenia among the Taurians*, 37–55; Herodotus, *History*, 4.103.

³⁷ Hospitality was associated with honorable culture. See M. Herzfeld, “‘As in Your Own House’: Hospitality, Ethnography, and the Stereotype of Mediterranean Society,” in *Honor and Shame and the Unity of the Mediterranean* (ed. D. D. Gilmore; Washington: American Anthropological Association, 1987), 75–89.

³⁸ This is the first occurrence of *natura* in Seneca’s *Phaedra*. The important theme is found in 176, 352, 481, 567, 959, and 1116. At the end of the play, Theseus refers to a natural avoidance of incest among animals (913–914).

³⁹ A few manuscripts have added ὀνομάζεται (‘named’), but its inclusion is not text-critically accepted. P⁶⁸ (7th cent) is the earliest manuscript to include it, and there is no good explanation of its omission in the earlier manuscripts if the reading is original.

Paul means that this type of sexual immorality does not 'exist' or 'occur' or 'happen' among the pagans, is not 'reported' or 'heard of' among the pagans, or is not 'tolerated' or 'condoned' or 'permitted' among them.⁴⁰ Some scholars note that incest did in fact occur among Gentiles, since it is mentioned in tragedies and is prohibited in laws. Therefore, Paul could not be stating that stepmother-stepson incest did not ever 'occur' or 'exist' among pagans, because that would be 'factually incorrect' and 'without warrant.'⁴¹ But the Senecan nurse similarly asserts that incest between a stepmother and stepson is an act "which no barbaric land has ever committed" (*quod non ulla tellus barbara commisit umquam*). The reader should not take the statements of Seneca and Paul as absolute descriptions that such acts never occurred without exception.⁴² The mutual purpose is a rhetorical statement (even hyperbole) of general repulsion for dramatic effect. Paul is rhetorically attempting to shame the Corinthian Christians with the cultural aversion to incest.⁴³ For this reason, the unstated verb could reasonably carry the meaning of 'exists,' 'occurs,' or 'is heard of.'

Second, commentators may overemphasize the role of Roman law in 1 Corinthians 5:1. R. A. Harrisville asserts that the phrase ἥτις οὐδὲ ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν "reflects an act beyond a mere breach of Gentile propriety in a violation of law."⁴⁴ E.-B. Allo agrees that by necessity "la situation revêtît un caractère d'illégalité."⁴⁵ The two issues of shamefulness and illegality are not mutually exclusive, of course, but formal law is only one way of demonstrating the cultural and customary unacceptability of behavior. "Incest was a crime founded

⁴⁰ NASB: 'does not exist'; NIV: 'does not occur'; NCV: 'does not happen'; RSV, NRSV, NAB, NJB: 'is not found'; REB, NEB, ESV: 'is not tolerated'; HCSB: 'is not condoned.' The possible meaning 'is not heard of' or 'is not reported' comes from the previously stated verb in the first phrase of the verse.

⁴¹ Winter, *After Paul*, 47; J. T. South, *Disciplinary Practices in Pauline Texts* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen, 1992), 29–30.

⁴² Cf. Andocides, *On the Mysteries*, 128: "Whether a deed such as this has ever been done among the Greeks before." See also the exaggerated exclamation in Cicero, *Pro Cluentio*: "Oh! To think of the woman's sin, unbelievable, unheard of in all experience save for this single instance!" (contra South, *Disciplinary Practices*, 73 n. 12).

⁴³ R. E. Oster refers to the 'obvious exaggeration' and decries those interpreters "who do not fully appreciate Paul's use of rhetoric" (Oster, *1 Corinthians*, 126). Cf. De Vos, "Stepmothers," 112.

⁴⁴ R. A. Harrisville, *1 Corinthians* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1987), 80.

⁴⁵ Allo, *Saint Paul*, 118.

not on statute but on custom.”⁴⁶ The *Digest* tied the incest prohibition to custom, natural law, and honorable decency.⁴⁷ Literary works, including tragic dramas, were another means of forming moral custom. Plato stated that incest was “hated of God and most shamefully shameful” and therefore its prohibition was an ‘unwritten law’ (νόμος ἄγραφος). Everyone hears this ‘public opinion’ from birth, since it is “expressed always and everywhere, not only in comic speech, but also in serious tragedy” (*Laws* 838A–D).⁴⁸ Seneca’s tragedy is such an example, and it emphasizes the presence of informal ‘taboos’ among the ‘barbarians,’ rather than formal, written laws. Although legal prohibitions may illustrate the restriction of incest (and in this sense be illustrative), the primary rhetorical context of ‘not even among the pagans’ can be cultural shame rather than precise law.

Third, the Senecan parallel illustrates the rhetorical effect of boundary maintenance found in Paul’s dramatic assertion. Both the Senecan nurse and Paul use a contrast with those ‘beyond the boundaries’ to incite shame among the readers/hearers. For Seneca, the ‘barbaric’ tribes (i.e., the Getae, Taurians, and Scythians) were ‘beyond the boundaries’ of civilized culture. For Paul, the ‘Gentile pagans’ (ἔθνεσιν) were ‘beyond the boundaries’ of God’s community. “The pagans serve only as a foil for the sharpness of his judgment concerning the case of the community.”⁴⁹ Expulsion would strengthen the community by reinforcing boundaries and clarifying self-identity.

Fourth, this study counters the recent work of M. Pascuzzi. She theorizes that some Corinthian believers were “fusing Christian preaching with some of the pervasive ideas or categories of Stoicism which may have produced the kind of behavior we come across in 1 Cor 5.”⁵⁰ She asserts, “Stoically influenced people would not consider incest a sin.”⁵¹ “Incest, like all other forms of sex, fell in the sphere of the morally indifferent. To recognize this and to act against social convention was an act of true freedom.”⁵² Her two evidences of a Stoic background are “Paul’s atypical reference to the pagans” in 5:1 and his use of πυνθεῖν in 5:2, which could counter a Stoic

⁴⁶ Robinson, *Criminal Law*, 54.

⁴⁷ *Digest* 23.2.8; 23.2.14.2.

⁴⁸ Translation in R. G. Bury, *Plato: Laws* (vol. 2; London: Heinemann, 1926), 157.

⁴⁹ H. Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975), 96.

⁵⁰ Pascuzzi, *Ethics*, 70.

⁵¹ Pascuzzi, *Ethics*, 79.

⁵² Pascuzzi, *Ethics*, 79.

emphasis on ἀπάθεια.⁵³ Pascuzzi claims that the ‘lone voice’ of Stoic dissent from “this rationalized brand of nothing less than gross immorality” was Musonius Rufus.⁵⁴ But Seneca the Younger (author of the *Phaedra*) was both a contemporary of Paul and a Stoic, and it would be difficult to press him into Pascuzzi’s caricature of first-century Stoicism.⁵⁵

Finally, in both Seneca and Paul the proper response is to ‘expel’ the offensive thought or person. Paul told the Corinthians to ‘remove’ the man ‘from your midst’ (ἀρθῇ ἐκ μέσου ὑμῶν), to ‘purge out’ (ἐκκαθάρατε) the leaven, and to ‘remove’ (ἐξάρατε) the evildoer (5:2, 7, 13). The Senecan nurse exhorted Phaedra to ‘drive out’ (*exturba*) and ‘expel’ (*expelle*) the hideous resolution (130, 169). In Phaedra’s case, purity of mind and heart was at stake (*casto pectore* in 130; *mente castifica* in 169). In the Corinthian situation, the purity of the community was threatened.⁵⁶

⁵³ Pascuzzi, *Ethics*, 84. Cf. Pascuzzi, *Ethics*, 78–83.

⁵⁴ Pascuzzi, *Ethics*, 79.

⁵⁵ On possible Stoic themes in Seneca’s *Phaedra*, see J.-M. Croisille, “Lieux communs, *Sententiae* et intentions philosophiques dans la *Phèdre* de Sénèque,” *Revue des études latines* 42 (1964): 276–301.

⁵⁶ See D. B. Martin, *The Corinthian Body* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 168–174; Rosner, *Paul*, 73–8. Rosner relates 1 Cor 5:1–13 to 3:16–17.

2 CORINTHIANS 11:22:
HISTORICAL CONTEXT, RHETORIC,
AND ETHNIC IDENTITY

Dennis C. Duling

David E. Aune has been a friend and colleague since our graduate school days at The University of Chicago. His scholarly studies range far and wide and his output is extraordinary. It includes original contributions in ancient literature and social-scientific interpretation,¹ and that is the subject of this piece. It is therefore my very great honor to contribute it to his *Festschrift*. I congratulate David and wish him many more years of productive scholarship!

To outsider observers “ethnic cleansing” is one of the horrors of the modern world. From nineteenth-century Native American death marches to more recent atrocities in places such as Cambodia, Kosovo, and Rwanda, sensitive people are stunned by the shocking violence human beings can commit against other human beings. Ethnic conflict is not just a modern phenomenon, however; it is also ancient. It is wed with ethnocentrism,² sometimes in the form of religiocentrism and, as Jan Assman has reminded us, exclusivist monotheism in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam has been a major contributor to ethnocentrism among Jews, Christians, and Muslims down through the centuries.³

The purpose of this paper is to examine an ancient statement about ethnicity, Paul’s reference in 2 Corinthians 11:22. In its immediate context it reads:

^{21b}But whatever any one dares to boast of—I am speaking as a fool—I also dare to boast of that. ²²*Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they descendants of Abraham? So am I.* ^{23a}Are they servants of Christ? I am a better one. . . .

¹ See especially David E. Aune, *Letter Writing in Its Literary Environment* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1987).

² Pieter F. Craffert, “On New Testament Interpretation and Ethnocentrism,” in *Ethnicity and the Bible* (ed. Mark G. Brett; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996), 449–68.

³ Jan Assman, *Moses the Egyptian. The Memory of Egypt in Western Monotheism*

In this passage Paul boasts of his ethnicity. My procedure in this study will be, first, to note Paul's conflicts with the Corinthians from two perspectives: historical criticism and rhetorical criticism. Then I look at Paul's rhetorical strategy in 2 Corinthians 10–13 as a context for 11:22. I add social-scientific perspectives, especially ethnicity theory, as a way to understand his ethnicity comment from a broader perspective. Finally, I weave together these historical, literary, rhetorical, and social-scientific threads to illumine more precisely how Paul uses his ethnicity as a support for his self-defense in conflict with his opponents at Corinth.

1. *Historical Criticism: The Composite Letter Approach*

Historical critics have attempted to interpret Paul's conflicts with the Corinthians by seeing 2 Corinthians as composite. They isolate letter fragments, determine their logical and chronological sequence, and then correlate them with Paul's statements about his movements and comparable statements in Acts.

A widely accepted historical reconstruction is based on the partition theory of Günther Bornkamm.⁴ After establishing the Corinthian church (Acts 18:1–18a) and returning to Antioch (Acts 18:18b–22), Paul went to Ephesus (Acts 19:1–20:1) where he wrote the earliest Corinthian letters (1 Cor 16:8). He composed a "Previous Letter" that did not survive (1 Cor 5:9), received oral and written communications from the Corinthians about problems at Corinth (1 Cor 1:11; 1 Cor 7:1), and responded with his advice in 1 Corinthians, delivered by Timothy (1 Cor 4:17; 16:10; cf. Acts 19:22). Most scholars view 1 Corinthians as a unity, a single letter.⁵

2 Corinthians, however, has usually been seen to contain letter fragments because it contains certain grammatical breaks and content

(Cambridge, MA, and London, UK: Harvard University Press, 1997), 7: "Monotheistic religions structure the relationship between the old the new in terms not of evolution but of revolution, and reject all older and other religions as 'paganism' or 'idolatry.' Monotheism always appears as a counter-religion."

⁴ Günther Bornkamm, "History of the Origin of the So-called Second letter to the Corinthians," *New Testament Studies* 8 (1962): 258–64.

⁵ Recently, Margaret M. Mitchell, *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation: An Exegetical Investigation of the Language and Composition of 1 Corinthians* (HUT 28; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1991).

shifts. First, 2 Corinthians 6:14–7:1 does not fit its context well and has very un-Pauline-sounding dualistic themes similar to ideas found in the Dead Sea Scrolls.⁶ When 6:14–7:1 is removed from its context, the previous verse, 6:13, continues smoothly at 7:2. 2 Corinthians 6:14–7:1 must therefore be a non-Pauline fragment.⁷ Second, there are also noticeable grammatical and content shifts at 2:14 (a thanksgiving) and at 7:5 (a Macedonian itinerary; cf. 2:13), suggesting that 2:14–7:4 (excluding the non-Pauline 6:14–7:1) is a unit. In this section Paul portrays himself as an advance processional herald;⁸ his statements reveal Paul's developing conflict with the Corinthians. In the surrounding passages (1:1–2:13; 7:5–16 [see also 13:11–13]), however, Paul's tone is conciliatory. Then, in chapter 8 Paul shifts to discussion of the collection of money for the poor at Jerusalem and in chapter 9 he suddenly talks about it again as though it had never been mentioned in chapter 8. This duplication suggests two more separate letters.⁹ Finally, chapter 10 launches into Paul's angry self-defense, which continues through chapter 13. These observations lead to the isolation of six letter fragments, five from Paul himself:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1) 1:1–2:13+7:5–16 (13:11–13) | Paul attempts reconciliation |
| 2) 2:14–6:13+7:2–4 | developing conflict |
| 3) 6:14–7:1 | <i>non-Pauline-sounding dualism</i> |
| 4) 8 | the collection |
| 5) 9 | the collection again |
| 6) 10–13 | high conflict |

⁶ Bornkamm, "History of the Origin," Joseph A. Fitzmyer, "Qumran and the Interpolated Paragraph in 2 Cor. 6:14–7:1," *CBQ* 23 (1961): 271–80.

⁷ J. David Hester Amador notes scholars of introductions who accept this view: Koester, Davies, Duling and Perrin, Barr, Freed, Ehrman, and Harris (note 1); among other scholars he cites Furnish, Schmithals, Bornkamm, Hurd, and Barrett; see Hester Amador, "Re-Reading 2 Corinthians: A Rhetorical Approach," in *Rhetorical Argumentation in Biblical Texts* (ed. Anders Eriksson, Thomas H. Olbricht, and Walter Überlacher; Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2002), 276. More detailed arguments are in Paul Brooks Duff, "The Mind of the Redactor: 2 Cor 6:14–7:1 in its Secondary Context," *NovT* 2 (1993): 161. Hans Dieter Betz holds that it is an *anti*-Pauline fragment; see Betz, "2 Cor 6:14–7:1: An Anti-Pauline Fragment?" *JBL* 92 (1973): 88–108.

⁸ Duff, "The Mind of the Redactor," 165, cites a number of scholars who think that Paul considered himself to be an advance herald of the epiphany procession in 2:14–7:4 (see Cor 2:14–16; 4:6; 4:10; 5:14a 6:13; 7:2); thus, Paul cries "open up," "make way" (6:13; 7:2a) to separate the unbelievers from the "the temple of the living God," the true Christian believers.

⁹ Hans Dieter Betz argues for two letters; see Betz, *2 Corinthians 8 and 9* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1985).

The most important sequential question is this: why would Paul attempt reconciliation (No. 1) before the conflict develops (No. 2) and reaches a boiling point (No. 6)? Historical critical scholars have commonly responded by rearranging the order of the five Pauline fragments:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1) 2:14–6:13+7:2–4 | developing conflict |
| 2) 10–13 | high conflict |
| 3) 1:1–2:13+7:5–16 (13:11–13) | Paul attempts reconciliation |
| 4) 8 | the collection |
| 5) 9 | the collection again |

This revised sequence allows for further literary and historical reconstruction. Titus, having urged the Corinthians to hurry up the collection for the poor at Jerusalem (2 Cor 8:5–6, 9:2; 12:18; cf. Gal 2:10), informed Paul at Ephesus that Paul's authority was being challenged by rival missionaries, whom Paul called "Superapostles" (3:1; 11:4–5, 13, 22; 12:11). Paul made a "painful visit" to Corinth (2 Cor 2:1; 12:14, 21; 13:1), which included an attack on him by some unnamed Corinthian, mentioned in the reconciliation fragment (1:1–2:13+7:5–16 [13:11–13]). He referred in particular to "the one to whom the wrong was done (*tou adikēthentos*)," that is, Paul himself, and "the one who did the wrong (*tou adikēsantos*)," that is, an unnamed offender (7:12). He returned to Ephesus and wrote what he called a "letter of tears" (2:3–4; 7:8) at the height of the conflict, perhaps delivered by Titus (2:12–13; 7:5–7). Part of this letter is Paul's angry self-defense in 2 Corinthians 10–13.¹⁰ Paul was imprisoned in Ephesus (1:8–11), wrote Philippians and Philemon, and after being released, rejoined Titus at Troas and learned from him that the conflict at Corinth had subsided (2:12–13; 7:5–16). Paul now wrote a "letter of reconciliation" (1:1–2:13 + 7:5–17) offering instructions about disciplining the person who had offended him (2:5–8). He then wrote two separate letters about the collection from Macedonia (chs. 8; 9), went to Corinth a third time (cf. Acts 20:2–3), and gathered the collection to take to Jerusalem.

¹⁰ Duff, "Mind of the Redactor," 160–63 and n. 1. Duff lists some scholars who have held 2 Cor 10–13 as a letter fragment; they include Fitzmyer, Bornkamm, Gniska, Bultmann, Koester, Bornkamm, Betz, and Hurd. Other defenders of the "tearful letter" theory are Francis Watson, "2 Cor. X–XIII and Paul's Painful Letter to the Corinthians," *JTS* 35 (1984): 324–46 and Laurence L. Welborn, "The Identification of 2 Corinthians 10–13 with the 'Letter of Tears,'" *NovT* 37 (1995): 138–53.

In this reconstruction Paul's statement about his ethnicity in 2 Corinthians 11:22 is located in the midst of Paul's "tearful letter." Historically it is a statement supporting his self-defense against the Superapostles and their challenge to his authority at Corinth when the conflict had developed and reached its height.

2. *Rhetorical Criticism: The Unified Letter Approach*

Especially since Hans Dieter Betz's Galatians commentary,¹¹ Paul's letters have been analyzed increasingly from the perspective of ancient Hellenistic rhetoric,¹² which Aristotle sub-divided into three types: judicial rhetoric (courtroom), deliberative rhetoric (political assembly debate), and epideictic rhetoric (praise and blame).¹³ This exegetical approach requires accepting the view that although Paul was an artisan, he had acquired a Greek education at least up to the secondary school level, and probably higher. Some rhetorical critics argue that the abrupt shifts in grammar, tone, and content in 2 Corinthians should be interpreted not as signs of letter fragments, but as indicators of rhetorical strategies. Certainly 1 Corinthians, Philippians, and Romans, can be seen as a unity.¹⁴ While scholars have been slower to take up 2 Corinthians from this perspective—the atypical, dualistic fragment in 6:14–7:1 is especially testy and Betz himself argued that it, as well as 2 Corinthians 8 and 9, are separate letter sections—a few recent scholars have now begun to interpret 2 Corinthians as a unity.¹⁵ J. David Hester Amador's general observation illustrates the point:

¹¹ Hans Dieter Betz, *Galatians* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1979).

¹² Benjamin Fiore, "New Testament Rhetoric and Rhetorical Criticism," in *Anchor Bible Dictionary* (6 vols.; ed. D. N. Freedman; New York, NY: Doubleday, 1992), 5:715–19.

¹³ Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, I.3.3–5.

¹⁴ E.g., *Philippians*: Carolyn Osiek, *Philippians and Philemon* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2000); *1 Corinthians*: Mitchell, *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation*; S. M. Pogoloff, *Logos and Sophia: The Rhetorical Situation of 1 Corinthians* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1992); A. D. Litfin, *St. Paul's Theology of Proclamation: 1 Corinthians 1–4 and Greco-Roman Rhetoric* (Cambridge, UK, and New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1994); *Romans*: Ben Witherington III with Darlene Hyatt, *Paul's Letter to the Romans: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI, and Cambridge, UK: William B. Eerdmans, 2004).

¹⁵ See, e.g., Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, "Paul and Macedonia: The Connection Between 2 Corinthians 2:13 and 2:14," *JST* 25 (1985): 99–103; F. Young and

... the many argumentative shifts [in 2 Corinthians] need not at all represent independent sources. To the contrary, they display a complex web of modalities, deictic relations, and argumentative strategies that build upon one another, presage, fulfill, and develop threads according to the presumed and anticipated reception of the letter.¹⁶

Concretely, some rhetorical critics note that there is no evidence for letter fragments in the ancient manuscripts of 2 Corinthians. They also observe that the putative “letter of tears” (2 Corinthians 10–13) focuses on the opponents’ challenge to Paul’s apostolic authority, but never mentions the person who offended him in the supposed reconciliation fragment (7:12; 2:5–8). Most typical are specific rhetorical critical arguments, such as:

- 1) The Dead Sea Scrolls-sounding dualistic 6:14–7:1 can be seen to fit its context if one takes account of Paul’s rhetorical flexibility (*inventio*), his use of insider-outsider contrasts elsewhere (e.g., 1 Thess; Rom 1–2; Gal), and his framing techniques (e.g., Rom 5:18–21 [6–7] 8:1–2; Gal 5:1 [5:2–12] 5:13–15).¹⁷
- 2) The putative letter of reconciliation (1:1–2:13+7:5–16 [13:11–13]) and the presumed letter of growing conflict (2:14–6:13+7:2–4) are not separate letter fragments, either. The shift between 2:13 and 2:14 is not sharp¹⁸ and 2:14 is not a separate thanksgiving introducing the growing conflict letter, but rather an introduction of an *argumentative strategy* based on the “triumphal procession.”¹⁹ Furthermore, 2:14–7:4 contains anticipations (*insinuation*) of what is rhetorically the climactic chapter, 10–13.²⁰

D. F. Ford, *Meaning and Truth in 2 Corinthians* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1987); J. Paul Sampley, “Paul, His Opponents in 2 Corinthians 10–13, and the Rhetorical Handbooks,” in *The Social World of Formative Christianity and Judaism: Essays in Tribute to Howard Clark Kee* (ed. H. C. Kee and J. Neusner; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988), 162–77; Frederick W. Danker, *II Corinthians* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 1989); “Paul’s Debt to the *De Corona* of Demosthenes: A Study of Rhetorical Techniques in Second Corinthians,” in *Persuasive Artistry: Studies in NT Rhetoric in Honor of George A. Kennedy* (ed. Duane F. Watson; Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991), 262–80; Ben Witherington III, *Conflict and Community in Corinth: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1995); Hester Amador, “Re-Reading 2 Corinthians”; Frank J. Matera, *2 Corinthians* (NTL; Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003); and Fredrick J. Long, *Ancient Rhetoric and Paul’s Apology: The Compositional Unity of 2 Corinthians* (SNTSMS 131; Cambridge, UK: University Press, 2004).

¹⁶ Hester Amador, “Re-Reading 2 Corinthians,” 93–4.

¹⁷ Hester Amador, “Re-Reading 2 Corinthians,” 101–102.

¹⁸ Murphy-O’Connor, “Paul and Macedonia,” 99–103.

¹⁹ The “epiphany procession” noted above, n. 8.

²⁰ Witherington, *Conflict and Community*, 239–31 notes as examples 2:17, “peddlers

- 3) Chapters 8 and 9 are not independent units, but an example of *paralepsis*, that is, a covert reminder that repeats a theme while claiming paradoxically that repetition is unnecessary.²¹
- 4) The shift in content and tone in chapters 10–13 is related to views already hinted at (*insinuatio*) in scattered verses in chapters 1–9,²² not to a separate letter fragment with a different message. Indeed, the “tearful letter” is probably lost forever.²³

Rhetorical critics claim that if Paul’s rhetorical strategies in 2 Corinthians are taken into account, letter fragments disappear. Indeed, chapters 1–9 prepare for the harsh rhetorical shift in 10–13, which is the climax, the natural conclusion of the former. In this interpretation, one would have to look for the meaning of Paul’s statement in 2 Corinthians 11:22 in relation to the *narratio* of 2 Corinthians as a whole.

3. *A Compromise: Both Historical and Rhetorical Approaches*

These two approaches represent different temperaments, as well as methods. Some rhetorical critics claim that rhetorical criticism is the “new wave” and that they understand ancient rhetorical conventions and letter writing better than historical critics do. They say that their view offers integrity to Paul’s letters as they now stand in the canon. Yet, historical critics remain tenacious about seeing the just how radical certain grammatical and content issues are and attempting to understand Paul’s reconstructed historical and social context.²⁴

of God’s word”; 3:1, letters of recommendation mentioned; 4:2, Paul denounces cunning rhetoric; 5:12, an apology for self-praise; 5:21 + 6:3, Paul is not an obstacle to reconciliation; 6:4–5, negative *peristasis* catalogue (see below); 7:2: Paul does not take advantage.

²¹ Hester Amador, “Revisiting,” 107.

²² Hester Amador, “Revisiting,” 99, notes: “confidence” (1:23–2:11; 3:1–4:6); boasting (1:12–14; 7:6–16), “obedience” in connection with “testing” (1:23–2:11, see also 1:9; 6:11; 9:13); “building up”/“tearing down” (4:7–6:10); catalogue of sufferings, or *peristasis* catalogue (see below; 1:3–11; 4:8–11; 5–6; 7:5; 8:2); being “beside oneself” (5:13); and the argumentative Satan 12:11; cf. 6:15); the total human vs. divine narrative; and the Macedonia-Titus-“brother” *narratio*.

²³ Witherington, *Conflict and Community*, 329–30. For a resurrection of the nineteenth century argument that the “tearful letter” is 1 Corinthians, see David R. Hall, *The Unity of the Corinthian Correspondence* (JSNTSup 251; London: T. & T. Clark, 2003).

²⁴ Challenges from other methods in recent decades—for example, Structuralists, Aristotelian literary critics, narrative critics, and linguistic analysts—have not led to the death of historical criticism, despite certain of its positivist and Modernist presuppositions.

In my view, the composite theory should not be dismissed simply as outdated Modernism. To dispense with the historical critical view runs the risk of falling prey to a “ruling hypothesis.” Similarly, historical critics ignore rhetorical criticism at their own risk. Thus, both approaches have important hermeneutical presuppositions and both are useful interpretative tools. Both can, and should, be used together.

To illustrate the possibilities, consider the historical problem that 10–13 does not mention the person whom Paul says offended him in the so-called letter of reconciliation. As Laurence Welborn argued, this historical problem can be solved in terms of a rhetorical convention:

One who wished to defend what was said or done in a manner that restored relations, avoided insofar as possible discussion of the source of strife. Only so much is said of the cause of conflict as is necessary in order to explain that it was not the author’s purpose to give offence. This simple principle is observed whenever the aim of a writing is conciliatory, whatever the rhetorical species. It is the response appropriate to the situation.

The convention is in keeping with the understanding of reconciliation in the Greco-Roman world: reconciliation was held to consist in an act of *deliberate forgetfulness*.²⁵

Just as Betz considered chapters 8 and 9 as discrete letter fragments but interpreted them with ancient rhetoric, in what follows I shall consider 10–13 as part of the “tearful letter,” but draw on ancient rhetoric to interpret it as a context for 11:22. Thus, 2 Corinthians 10–13 as part of Paul’s “tearful letter” represents carefully formulated rhetorical responses at the height of Paul’s conflict with the Corinthians. It is filled with especially judicial and epideictic rhetoric. Paul *accuses* his opponents, *defends* himself, and *boasts* of his human heritage and qualifications while ironically claiming to boast “only in the Lord.” Throughout Paul is defending his honor.²⁶ Christopher Forbes states that Paul uses three important rhetorical strategies in his defense: irony, self-praise, and comparison.²⁷ These will be most helpful for interpreting Paul’s ethnic statement in 11:22.

²⁵ Welborn, “Identification,” 150–51 (emphasis mine).

²⁶ Duane F. Watson, “Paul’s Boasting in 2 Corinthians 10–13 as Defenses of His Honor: A Socio-Rhetorical Analysis,” in *Rhetorical Argumentation in Biblical Texts. Essays from the Lund 2000 Conference* (ed. Anders Eriksson, Thomas H. Olbricht, and Walter Überacker; Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2002), 260–75.

²⁷ See esp. Christopher Forbes, “Comparison, Self-Praise, and Irony: Paul’s Boasting and the Conventions of Hellenistic Rhetoric,” *NTS* 32 (1986): 1–30.

3.1. *Irony* (εἰρωνεία): “The Fool” and His Speech

The term “irony” (Greek εἰρωνεία) was more precise in Hellenistic usage than it is in modern English usage.²⁸ The author of Pseudo-Aristotle’s “Rhetoric to Alexander” said, “[i]rony is saying something while pretending not to say it, or calling things by the opposite of their real names.”²⁹ The person using irony (the εἰρων) might, for example, pretend to be modest, but is actually immodest. Although Plato admired Socrates’ pretended humility,³⁰ most ancient rhetoricians objected to false modesty, especially because it pointed to avoiding responsibility. Quintilian considered open boasting more tolerable than irony.³¹

Yet, the rhetoricians also recognized that in certain situations irony could be an excellent rhetorical strategy. Pseudo-Aristotle says, “In vituperations also you should employ irony, and ridicule your opponent for the things on which he prides himself.”³² A specific example is that if one had been poorly treated and experienced “indignation” (βαρύτης), irony was a reasonable rhetorical response.³³

There are excellent analyses of irony in 2 Corinthians 10–13.³⁴ I shall restrict myself mostly to one of the most distinctive illustrations, namely, Paul’s self-portrait as “the fool” and his composition of the “Fool’s Speech.”

Long ago Hans Windisch suggested that in 2 Corinthians 10–13 Paul was playing the role of “the boaster” or “the braggart” (ὁ ἀλαζών), a fool’s role about which he had learned from his personal

²⁸ Forbes, “Comparison,” 10; Witherington, *Conflict and Community*, 443.

²⁹ Ps. Aristotle, *Rhetoric to Alexander*, 1434a and 1441b 23; Forbes, “Comparison.”

³⁰ Plato, *Republic*, 337a; Forbes, “Comparison.”

³¹ Quintilian, *Inst. Or.* 8.VI.57–59; 11.I.20.

³² Ps. Aristotle, *Rhetoric to Alexander*, 1434a and 1441b 23.

³³ Hermogenes, *On Rhetorical Forms*, 2.VIII; Forbes, “Comparison,” 12–13.

³⁴ See Hans Dieter Betz, “Paul’s Apology: II Corinthians 10–13 and the Socratic Tradition,” in *Protocol of the Second Colloquy, the Center for Hermeneutical Studies and Modern Culture* (ed. Wilhelm Wuellner; Berkeley, CA: The Graduate Theological Union and the University of California [= *Colloquy* 2], 1970), 1–16; Edwin A. Judge, “Paul’s Boasting in Relation to Contemporary Professional Practice,” *ABR* 16 (1968): 37–50; Forbes, “Comparison”; Laurence L. Welborn, “The Runaway Paul,” *HTR* 92 (1999): 115–63; Glenn S. Holland, “Speaking like a Fool: Irony in 2 Corinthians 10–13,” in *Rhetoric and the New Testament. Essays from the 1992 Heidelberg Conference* (JSNTSup 90; Sheffield, UK: Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Press, 1993), 250–64; idem, *Divine Irony* (Selinsgrove, PA: Susquehanna University Press, 2000), esp. chapter 5, “Speaking Like a Fool: Irony in the Letters of Paul.”

experience of mime in the theater.³⁵ Lawrence Welborn has taken Windisch's suggestion seriously and tracked the fool profile in many ancient sources.³⁶ In the theater the fool appeared barefoot, bald-headed, often with exaggerated facial nose and ears, and some-times with a prominent phallus. He did not usually wear a mask, but donned a short frock and colorful tunic. He became a caricature of ugly, grotesque realism, a role calculated to make Mediterranean audiences laugh. The fool sometimes made his appearance to entertain guests at private banquets. He could also be found at street fairs and in marketplaces. He is portrayed on terra-cotta statues and on vase paintings. There were even fool subtypes: the leading slave, the braggart warrior, the foolish old man, and the learned imposter. It is possible that these caricatures lay behind Paul's description of the Superapostles as fools in 11:20: "For you bear it if a man makes slaves of you, or preys upon you, or takes advantage of you, or puts on airs, or strikes you in the face." Be that as it may, Welborn thinks it very likely that Paul had learned about the jesting buffoon in comedies he had read at school.

In addition to his comment about the fool Windisch also suggested that 2 Corinthians 11:21b–12:10 was a "Fool's Speech" and that it had a Preface in 11:1–21a.³⁷ Wherever Paul learned about the fool, there can be no doubt that he is consciously "speaking like a fool" in this section—he says so several times explicitly—and that his rhetorical technique includes irony.³⁸ Thus, it is possible to analyze the rhetorical strategy of the Fool's Speech further. Several points can be noted.

As advance warning for his Fool's Speech, Paul establishes some ground rules for "boasting" in 2 Corinthians 10. He says that he will not "boast beyond limit" (10:13), that is, of work done by others (10:16b), and, echoing Jeremiah, that his boasting will be only "of the Lord" (10:17; Jer 9:23–24).³⁹ His self-imposed limitation will be

³⁵ Hans Windisch, *Der zweite Korintherbrief* (KEK 6; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1924), 363–64.

³⁶ Welborn, "The Runaway Paul"; see also Josef Zmijewski, *Der Stil der paulinische "Narrenrede": Analyse der Sprachgestaltung in 2 Kor 11,1–12,10 als Beitrag zur Methodik von Stiluntersuchungen neutestamentlicher Texte* (BBB 52; Cologne/Bonn: Peter Hanstein, 1978).

³⁷ See also Zmijewski, *Der Stil*.

³⁸ Forbes, "Comparison"; Jan Lambrecht, "The Fool's Speech and its Context: Paul's Particular Way of Arguing in 2 Cor 10–13," *Bib* 82 (2001): 305–324.

³⁹ Scott J. Hafemann, "'Self-commendation' and Apostolic Legitimacy in 2 Corinthians: a Pauline Dialectic?" *NTS* 36 (1990): 66–88; Holland, "Speaking like a Fool," 253.

stated again in the Fool's Speech itself when he says that he does not boast of himself, but only of his weakness (11:23; 12:5).⁴⁰ This later comment echoes Christ's weakness as power⁴¹ and, indeed, the paradox that "God's foolishness" in the crucifixion is God's true wisdom (1 Cor 1:18–25). Yet, under the right conditions Paul breaks his rule. Likewise, he says that he will not use comparison, the rhetorical strategy of his opponents (10:12–13). Yet, again, under the right conditions he breaks his rule: he, too, will play the fool.

In the Prologue to the Fool's Speech (11:1–21a) Paul uses the terms "fool" and "foolish" six times.⁴² He warns his readers that he will boast like a fool:

I repeat, let no one think me a fool (ἄφρονα, "foolish"); but even if you do, accept me as a fool (ἄφρονα, "foolish"), so that I too may boast a little. (What I am saying I say not with the Lord's authority but in foolishness [ἐν ἀφροσύνῃ], in this boastful confidence; . . . (11:16–17; see 11:21).

Yet, in the Fool's Speech proper (11:22–12:10) Paul says that he will not be a fool because he wants to speak the truth (12:6). Nonetheless, again he proceeds to boast and again he warns the Corinthians about his boasting, this time stating that he has been forced into it (12:11). Holland concludes, "Everything he says then may be expected to be self-contradictory, worldly, self-congratulatory, boastful."⁴³

Paul's use of irony can be spotted in several verses. In 2 Corinthians 11:19 Paul says, "For you gladly bear with fools, being wise yourselves!" Most commentators have taken this statement to be ironic, that is, the Corinthians are not wise in bearing with the Superapostles as fools.⁴⁴ Immediately thereafter, when he claims not to have been a fool who caused them to suffer like the Superapostles, he says, "To my shame, I must say, we were too weak for that!" (11:21a).

⁴⁰ Long, *Ancient Rhetoric*, 186–87.

⁴¹ Timothy B. Savage, *Power through Weakness: Paul's Understanding of the Christian Ministry in 2 Corinthians* (SNTSMS 86; Cambridge, UK: University Press, 1996).

⁴² 11:1, 17, 21 (ἀφροσύνη, "foolishness"); 11:16 [2x], 19 (ἄφρων, "foolish").

⁴³ Holland, "Speaking like a Fool," 256.

⁴⁴ E.g., Aida B. Spencer, "The Wise Fool (and the Foolish Wise): A Study of Irony in Paul," *NovT* 23 (1981): 358; see Holland, "Speaking like a Fool," 256–57, n. 22, for several commentators. Holland is not so certain of the irony in this case, since the wise "suffer fools gladly"; yet, he admits that in their wisdom they may have misunderstood. For his discussion of ironic intention and the difficulty of isolating irony in familiar texts, see Glenn S. Holland, "Revisiting 2 Corinthians: Rhetoric and the Case for Unity," *NTS* 46 (2000): 92–111.

This is a clear case of irony, since elsewhere it is precisely his weakness “in the Lord” that is the occasion for his boasting. This statement immediately precedes Paul’s boast about his ethnicity, the focus of attention here.

3.2. *Self-Praise* (περιαντολογία)

In Greco-Roman literature self-praise (περιαντολογία, “to speak about oneself,” “bragging,” “boasting”) was usually considered offensive and thus to be avoided. Lucian, for example, critiques by caricature the popular teacher by having him recommend to his student, “. . . if anyone accosts you, make marvelous assertions about yourself, be extravagant in your self-praise, and make yourself a nuisance to him. . . .”⁴⁵ For Lucian, boasting was distasteful.

Nonetheless, rhetoricians permitted the use of self-praise under certain conditions.⁴⁶ These conditions are set out in Plutarch’s key document, “On Praising Oneself Inoffensively.”⁴⁷ One may praise oneself:

- 1) if it promotes a worthy end;
- 2) if one is defending one’s good name against slander, or when in peril or on trial;
- 3) if speaking otherwise would have been shameful;
- 4) if one hopes to inspire others to good behavior when it is for their own good;
- 5) if one needs to curb or humiliate the obstinate and impetuous;
- 6) if it is necessary to intimidate one’s enemies and raise the spirits one’s friends; and
- 7) if it is necessary to direct the hearer to a better course of action when (s)he has been led to imitate those who honor good rather than evil.

Should these conditions prevail several strategies for praising oneself are possible:

⁴⁵ Lucian, “A Professor of Public Speaking,” 13.21.

⁴⁶ Witherington’s comment, *Conflict and Community*, 432, that “[s]elf-admiration and self-praise were *de rigueur* in Greco-Roman society, especially for those who wanted to raise their social status and social evaluation in the eyes of others” needs to be nuanced more in light of Plutarch and his predecessors.

⁴⁷ Plutarch, *Moralia*; Peter Marshall, *Enmity in Corinth: Social Conventions in Paul’s Relations with the Corinthians* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1987), 353–54; Watson, “Paul’s Boasting,” 269–73.

- 1) give some of the credit to God and chance;
- 2) stress more moderate virtues such as an honorable character or noble life, rather than wealth, power, and eloquence; and
- 3) moderate self-praise by referring to minor flaws.

Paul could not have known the writings of Plutarch, but earlier rhetoricians made some of the same claims⁴⁸ and Paul could have learned these ideas in his rhetorical education. In any case, from Paul's perspective, such conditions were present. He had been slandered as not being a true apostle, as writing strong letters but lacking oral rhetorical skills, as crafty, and as weak and lacking in charisma. He was being inconsistent, and perhaps he was being labeled a flatterer (*kolax*).⁴⁹ To protect his honor, it was imperative that he defend himself. He was willing—with a certain amount of irony—to use self-praise. Demosthenes claimed that he was forced to speak about himself;⁵⁰ similarly, Paul claimed that his opponents forced him into it (12:11). Furthermore, Paul used technical “defense speech” language when he spoke of talking “on behalf (*hyper*) of himself” (11:23; 12:5).⁵¹ The hoped-for result was to direct the Corinthians to a better course of action, to good behavior, and to a worthy end. Clearly, Paul's boast about his ethnicity in 11:22 is an example of rhetorical self-praise.

3.3. *Comparison* (συγκρίσις)

Aristotle laid the groundwork for understanding *synkrisis*—comparison (and contrast)—in especially two ways: as a tool of defense in forensic rhetoric and especially as a means of amplification (*auxēsis*) in epideictic rhetoric.⁵² Although a number of ancient rhetoricians discuss comparison, the following comments in the *Progymnasmata* of Aelius Theon may be taken as representative:

⁴⁸ Long, *Ancient Rhetoric*, 91–95, notes “self-adulation” as a common legal defense in writers such as Lysias, Hermagoras, Hyperides, and Antiphon, and in speeches by Demosthenes, Isaeus, and others.

⁴⁹ As in Plutarch's *How To Tell A Friend From A Flatterer*.

⁵⁰ Demosthenes, *On the Crown*, 321; see Long, *Ancient Rhetoric*, 186.

⁵¹ Long, *Ancient Rhetoric*, 186–87.

⁵² *Rhetoric* 1393b 4, 1419b 35; Forbes, “Comparison,” 2–3; cp. Burton L. Mack, “Elaboration of the *Chreia* in the Hellenistic School,” in Mack and Vernon K. Robbins, *Patterns of Persuasion* (Sonoma, CA: Polebridge Press, 1989), 31–67.

Comparison (συγκρίσις) is a form of speech which contrasts the better and the worse. Comparisons are drawn between people, and between things. . . . When one distinguishes between people, one takes into consideration their acts, but if there is anything else of merit about them, then the one method would suffice for both. Firstly it should be noted that comparisons are not drawn between things which are vastly different from each other. . . . In the comparison of people, one firstly juxtaposes their status, education, offspring, positions held, prestige and physique; if there is any other physical matter or external merit, it should be stated beforehand in the material for the *encomia*. Next one compares actions, preferring the finer ones and those responsible for more numerous and greater benefits;. . .⁵³

In short, comparisons of people involve physiognomic stereotypes, ethnicity, and social rank.

As previously noted, Paul says that he will not stoop to make use comparison as his opponent Suprapostles do. Yet, he does precisely that. To illustrate Paul’s scattered use of *synkrisis*, consider some of his contrasts between the Suprapostles and himself in both ideas and actions.

Suprapostles	Paul
Preach “another Jesus” (11:4)	Preaches Christ crucified
Commend themselves (self-praise) by comparing themselves to each other (10:12–12)	Boasts and compares, but stresses what the Lord commends (praises) counts most.
“their boasted mission” (11:12)	Paul boasts of his authority as a fool, yet of his weakness (10:8; 12:9–10); he boasts “of the Lord” (10:17)
Offer a “different spirit” (11:4)	The Corinthians received the (true) spirit from Paul (11:4)
Offer a “different gospel” (11:4)	The Corinthians accepted Paul’s gospel (11:4), the crucified Christ (13:4)
Sufferings (probably in the form of a <i>peristasis</i> [περιστάσις] catalogue [see below])	Sufferings of the servant: <i>peristasis</i> catalogue (11:23–27 [see below])
(Apostolic tradition of support? E.g., Q 10; <i>Didachē</i>)	Supports self by trade; received support from Macedonia (11:9)

⁵³ Theon, *Progymnasmata*; Forbes, “Comparison,” 6.

Table (*cont.*)

Superapostles	Paul
Accusation: They say that Paul writes strong letters, but is rhetorically unskilled in speaking (10:10; ; 11:6)	Defense: “my letters do seem to be frightening you” (10:9); “we do when present what we say when absent” (10:11); “even if unskilled in speaking, not in knowledge” (11:6)
(another Jesus?)	Visions and revelations of the Lord, yet thorn in flesh (12:1–8)
(another spirit?)	Heavenly travel & divine words (12:2–3)
Weak	Power perfect in weakness (12:9–10)
(performed miracles)	Signs of an apostle performed among you: signs, wonders, mighty works (12:12)
Paul is crafty, with guile (12:16)	Titus and I acted in the same spirit in not taking advantage of you (12:17–18); we did not take advantage, put on airs, strike you in the face (11:20)
(They have only recently come)	We were the first to come to you (10:14)

One may also note from the letter of growing conflict (2:14–6:13+7:2–4):

They have letters of recommendation (3:1–3)	The Corinthians are Paul’s letter of recommendation (3:2–3)
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These comparisons (contrasts) have become the basis for a plausible historical reconstruction. While Paul was absent from Corinth rival missionaries appeared, opponents who attacked Paul’s credentials. They claimed to be of Israelite background (11:22); complimented each other each other (10:12, 18); carried “letters of recommendation” (3:1–3); performed miracles; attacked Paul for supporting himself by his trade, but at the same time claimed that he took advantage of them by gathering a collection (11:7–9; 12:6, 13); attacked Paul by saying “his letters are weighty and strong, but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible” (10:10; cf. 11:6). For them,

Paul was rhetorically inept, of low social status. He lacked the proper personal and representative authority to be an apostle. Moreover, as Paul says in the letter of reconciliation, someone at Corinth had deeply offended him (2 Cor 1:23; 2:4–5), perhaps by making a report about all his social and personal deficiencies.⁵⁴ Dieter Georgi once argued that these rival “Superapostles” viewed Jesus as a charismatic miracle worker, the so-called “Divine Man.”⁵⁵ Whatever the precise identity of the opponents and their view of Jesus, it is clear that Paul used judicial and epideictic rhetoric to defend himself. Self-praise and comparison/contrast were two of his most important rhetorical tools.

The basis for the above historical reconstruction is comparison. Long shows how Paul’s rhetorical defense in the Fool’s Speech has parallels in other ancient forensic speeches:⁵⁶

- 1) Like Demosthenes, he was forced to speak about himself (12:11).
- 2) He used technical defense language, *hyper*, “about,” or “concerning” himself, and especially *hyper egō*, “I am a better one” (11:23).
- 3) He compares himself to his opponents in terms of his “race, heritage, and parentage” (11:22).
- 4) He uses encomiastic conventions, such as the *peristasis* catalogue (11:23b–28 [see below]).
- 5) He cites his religious experiences (12:1–7a).

The most dramatic illustration of this rhetorical strategy in the immediate context of 2 Corinthians 11:22 is number 4, Paul’s famous *paristasis* catalogue (11:23b–28). John T. Fitzgerald’s study of Catalogues of Hardships offers the essential background information.⁵⁷

In brief, the ancient Greek term *peristasis* (περιστάσις), derived from *peristēmi* (περίστημι), “I stand around,” “I surround,” refers literally to what is simply around one, or “circumstance.” Circumstances can

⁵⁴ Hans Dieter Betz, “Corinthians, Second Epistle to the,” in *Anchor Bible Dictionary* (6 vols; ed. D. N. Freedman; New York, NY: Doubleday, 1992), 1:1149.

⁵⁵ Dieter Georgi, *The Opponents of Paul in Second Corinthians: A Study on Religious Propaganda in Antiquity* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005 [1964 (German); 1986]); see Laurence L. Welborn, “Georgi’s *Gegner*: Reflections on the Occasion of its Translation,” *JR* 68 (1988) 566–574; Anitra Bingham Kolenkow, “Paul and his Opponents in 2 Cor 10–13: THEIOI ANDRES and Spiritual Guides,” in *Religious Propaganda and Missionary Competition in the New Testament World* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994), 351–74.

⁵⁶ Long, *Ancient Rhetoric*, 188–90.

⁵⁷ John T. Fitzgerald, *Cracks in the Earthen Vessel. An Examination of the Catalogues of Hardships in the Corinthian Correspondence* (SBLDS 99; Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1988).

be positive, neutral, or negative; when negative, the term *peristasis* means “hardship” or “adversity.” External “hardships” beyond one’s control are usually attributed to Fate or the Divine Will.⁵⁸ The ancient philosophers, especially the Stoics, think that one’s true character appears in times of times of adversity.⁵⁹ Indeed, difficult circumstances afford an opportunity to demonstrate one’s character, prove one’s virtue—in short, reveal one’s true “manhood”—and if successful, to receive one’s due honor. Seneca says, “Disaster is Virtue’s opportunity.”⁶⁰

Both Stoic and Cynic philosophers say that hardships are especially characteristic of the life of the wise sage. He is that rare person able to meet adversity with reason and intellect, therefore with perseverance, courage, and happiness, refined by superior training and practice (*askesis*). This attitude is true knowledge, which is the perfection of reason and virtue.⁶¹ Seneca says that the sage does not retaliate when struck; he “steps back”;⁶² he displays “calmness in the midst of provocation.”⁶³ He is the ultimate righteous sufferer, the just man unjustly punished.⁶⁴ Nonetheless, in contrast to the unjust man, the just man ultimately receives the highest praise, the honor due him.

It is not surprising that the ancients often developed lists of hardships, or “*peristasis* catalogues.” While circumstances can be either “good” or “bad,”⁶⁵ these lists were usually about sufferings. They could be general, that is, of humans qua humans, or specific, that is, associated with specific groups, occupations, or persons.⁶⁶ Typically mentioned adversities were war, famine, shipwreck, journeys, persecutions, violence, exile, slavery, poverty, destitution, old age, and death.

Paul develops several *peristasis* catalogues,⁶⁷ but the most complete example is in the Fool’s Speech, 2 Corinthians 11:23b–28. It is an

⁵⁸ Fitzgerald, *Cracks in the Earthen Vessel*, 33–40; 70–87.

⁵⁹ Fitzgerald, *Cracks in the Earthen Vessel*, 42.

⁶⁰ *Prof.* 4.6.

⁶¹ Fitzgerald, *Cracks in the Earthen Vessel*, 54.

⁶² *Ira* 2.34.5.

⁶³ *Const.* 4.3.

⁶⁴ Fitzgerald, *Cracks in the Earthen Vessel*, 48, 100–107.

⁶⁵ Fitzgerald, *Cracks in the Earthen Vessel*, 45.

⁶⁶ Fitzgerald, *Cracks in the Earthen Vessel*, 47–49.

⁶⁷ In the Corinthian correspondence, 1 Cor 4:9–13; 2 Cor 4:8–9; 6:4–10; 11:23–28; 12:10.

extended example of comparison, in this case an attempt to demonstrate Paul's superiority to the "Superapostles" as a servant of Christ (11:23a):

²³Are they servants of Christ? I am a better one (ὕπερ ἐγώ)—I am talking like a madman (παρὰφρονῶν)—with far greater labors, far more imprisonments, with countless beatings, and often near death. ²⁴Five times I have received at the hands of the Jews the forty lashes less one. ²⁵Three times I have been beaten with rods; once I was stoned. Three times I have been shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been adrift at sea; ²⁶on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger from robbers, danger from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brethren; ²⁷in toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. ²⁸And, apart from other things, there is the daily pressure upon me of my anxiety for all the churches.

Here Paul cites his sage-like credentials. He "boasts" of his accomplishments and his rhetorical strategy is—yes!—comparison.

Long's third point showing that Paul's defense is parallel to other ancient defense speeches is that Paul appeals to his "race, heritage, and parentage." This is really a comparison about ethnicity. To that boastful and perhaps ironic comparison I now turn.

4. 2 Corinthians 11:22 in its Rhetorical and Social Context

In 2 Corinthians 11:22 Paul appears to abandon his own rhetorical rules. In his self-defense, and with a touch of irony, he uses self-praise—boasting—and comparison: "Are they Hebrews (Ἑβραῖοι)? *So am I*. Are they Israelites (Ἰσραηλῖται)? *So am I*. Are they seed of Abraham (σπέρμα Ἀβραάμ)? *So am I*." In his ethnic self-defense he is claiming *equivalence*, that is, in being a Hebrew, an Israelite, and of the seed of Abraham he is *like* the Superapostles. This ethnic statement leads into—sets the stage for—the following *peristasis* catalogue in which Paul's comparison indicates *superiority*—"I am a better one (ὕπερ ἐγώ)."

Paul's brief construction of his ethnicity is similar to his more expanded self-description in Philippians 3:5, also used to defend himself "in the flesh" against opponents.⁶⁸ The Philippians verse contains the following description:

⁶⁸ Dennis C. Duling, "Ethnicity, Ethnocentrism, and the Matthean *Ethnos*." Paper

- 1) “circumcised (περιτομή) on the eighth day”;
- 2) “of the ‘people’ (γένους) of Israel”;
- 3) “of the ‘tribe’ (φυλῆς) of Benjamin”;
- 4) “a ‘Hebrew’ (Ἑβραῖος) (born) of ‘Hebrews’ (Ἑβραίων)”;
- 5) “‘as to the law’ (κατὰ νόμον) a ‘Pharisee’ (Φαρισαῖος)”;
- 6) “as to zeal a persecutor of the ‘church’ (ἐκκλησίαν)”;
- 7) “as to righteousness under the ‘law’ (νόμῳ) becoming blameless.”

In Paul’s three statements in 2 Corinthians 11:22 his claim to be a “Hebrew” is like “a (born) of Hebrews.” His claim to be an Israelite is like “of the people of Israel.” And his claim to be of the seed of Abraham is similar to “the eighth day with respect to circumcision,” that is, the sign of the Abrahamic covenant. Before pursuing their content further, I would like to add a few brief comments about modern ethnicity theory in relation to ancient Mediterraneans.

4.1. *Modern Ethnicity Theory and Ancient Mediterraneans*

There are several well known theoretical approaches to the study of ethnicity.⁶⁹ “Primordialists,” following in the wake of Eduard Shils and Clifford Geertz,⁷⁰ emphasize that ethnicity is based on a group’s deep, ineffable, overpowering emotional attachments that are static, unchanging, and involuntary. It is rooted in language, family, territory, custom, and religion.

Following a trail blazed by Fredrik Barth,⁷¹ Constructionists develop a conscious alternative to Primordialism. They say that that ethnic

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⁶⁹ For more extensive treatment, see Duling, *ibid.* and “‘Whatever Gain I Had . . .’: Ethnicity and Paul’s Self-Identification in Phil. 3:5–6,” in *Fabrics of Discourse: Essays in Honor of Vernon K. Robbins* (ed. David B. Gowler, L. Gregory Bloomquist, and Duane F. Watson; Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2003), 222–41; Philip F. Esler, *Conflict and Identity in Romans. The Social Setting of Paul’s Letter* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2003), here chapter 3, “Ethnicity, Ethnic Conflict and the Ancient Mediterranean World.” See especially Richard Jenkins “Social Anthropological Models of Inter-Ethnic Relations,” in *Theories of Race and Ethnic Relations* (ed. J. Rex and D. Mason; Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 170–86; *Rethinking Ethnicity: Arguments and Explorations* (London, UK: Sage, 1997).

⁷⁰ Eduard Shils, “Primordial, Personal, Sacred and Civil Ties,” *British Journal of Sociology* 8 (1957): 130–45; Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1973).

⁷¹ Fredrik Barth, ed., *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Cultural Difference* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown and Company, 1969 [1998 reprint]); “Enduring and Emerging Issues in the Analysis of Ethnicity,” in *The Anthropology of Ethnicity*:

identity is not static, but that ethnic groups constantly change their views of their ethnicity. They recognize that there is “cultural stuff”—language, dress, and core values, and the like—but their real interest is in how ethnic groups generate and maintain their group boundaries,⁷² that is, “the social organization of cultural difference.”⁷³

Instrumentalists begin with Constructionism, but emphasize that ethnic groups define their ethnicity in rational and self-interested ways in order to further their own political-economic agendas.⁷⁴

Two other theoretical approaches are Social Psychologists who concentrate on kinship myths, collective honor, and stereotyping,⁷⁵ and Ethno-symbolists who are most interested in cosmogonic and election myths, golden age memories, and symbols of ethnicity.⁷⁶

There are numerous attempts to critique, as well as synthesize, all these theories of ethnicity.⁷⁷ Here I shall be eclectic and focus on key “primordial” elements, but take seriously the Constructionist point that ethnicity is not static. Combining Shils’ and Geertz’s five features with those of Hutchinson and Smith⁷⁸ who modified Schermerhorn’s analysis,⁷⁹ I arrive at seven features:⁸⁰

Beyond “Ethnic Groups and Boundaries” (ed. Hans Vermeulen and Cora Govers; Amsterdam, Netherlands: Het Spinhuis, 1994), 11–32.

⁷² Barth *Ethnic Groups*, 13–14; see Duling, “‘Whatever Gain I Had,’” 222–41.

⁷³ This is the subtitle of Barth, *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*. Barth’s subjective approach led him to later think of himself as a forerunner of Postmodernism (Barth, “Enduring.”).

⁷⁴ Ashutosh Varshney, *Ethnic Conflict and Rational Choice: a Theoretical Engagement* (Cambridge, MA: Center for International Affairs, Harvard University, 1995); see Duling 2001, Appendix 1, for a summary of rational choice theory. See also Michael Banton, “Rational Choice Theories,” *American Behavioral Scientist* 38 (1995): 478–97.

⁷⁵ See Donald Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1985).

⁷⁶ John Armstrong, *Nations before Nationalism* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1982).

⁷⁷ G. M. Scott, Jr. “A Resynthesis of the Primordial and Circumstantial Approaches to Ethnic Group Solidarity: Towards an Explanatory Model,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 13 (1990): 147–71; Philip Q. Yang, *Ethnic Studies: Issues and Approaches* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2000), 47–56. One example is James McKay, “An Exploratory Synthesis of Primordial and Mobilizationist Approaches to Ethnic Phenomena,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 5 (1982): 395–420.

⁷⁸ John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith, *Ethnicity* (Oxford Reader; Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1996), 6.

⁷⁹ R. A. Schermerhorn, *Comparative Ethnic Relations* (New York, NY: Random House, 1978) 12 [*italics mine*]; quoted in Hutchinson and Smith, *Ethnicity*, 12.

⁸⁰ Duling, “‘Whatever Gain I Had . . .,’” 227–28, developed in Duling, “Ethnicity, Ethnocentrism, and the Matthean *Ethnos*.”

- 1) a *proper* name that identifies and expresses the community's "essence";
- 2) myths of common ancestry related to some distant time and place, giving a sense of fictive kinship;
- 3) shared memories of "the past," including heroes and events, and their commemoration;
- 4) phenotypical (genetic) features;
- 5) some connection with a homeland, whether physical or symbolic;
- 6) a common culture, including language and religion;
- 7) a sense of solidarity with an ethnic population.

Not every feature has to be present in every self-definition; however, two of them—kinship and homeland—are virtually universal.

Does modern ethnicity theory have any relevance for antiquity? Consider the following quotation from Herodotus:

For there are many great reasons why we should not . . . [desert to the Persians], even if we so desired; first and foremost, the burning and destruction of the adornments and temples of our gods, whom we are constrained to avenge to the utmost rather than make pacts with the perpetrator of these things, and next the *kinship of all Greeks in blood and speech*, and *the shrines of gods and the sacrifices that we have in common*, and the *likeness of our way of life*, to all of which it would not befit the Athenians to be false.⁸¹

This ancient quotation emphasizes the name (Greeks, specifically Athenians), opposition to the Persians, a common kinship, a common language, a common religion, and common customs. While it is important not to force ancient views into modern theory, and, while it is true that the Greek term *ethnos*, from which "ethnicity" comes, has a broader meaning than its modern derivative,⁸² it is also true that *ethnos* in antiquity includes the above phenomena. This conclusion will be helpful for understanding what Paul *chose* to cite for his ethnic heritage.

⁸¹ Herodotus *Histories* 8.144.2 (italics mine [Loeb (Godley)]); see J. M. Hall, *Ethnic Identity in Greek Antiquity* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 44; Duling, "Ethnicity, Ethnocentrism, and the Matthean *Ethnos*."

⁸² Duling, "Whatever Gain I Had . . .," 228–33, has an extensive discussion of the semantic domain and philology. See also J. G. Muthuraj, "The Meaning of *ethnos* and *ethnē* and its Significance to the Study of the New Testament," *Bangalore Theological Forum* 29 (1997): 3–36.

4.2. *Rhetoric and Ethnicity in 2 Corinthians 11:22*

Behind 2 Corinthians 10–13 lies a conflict between Paul and the Superapostles, which is transformed into a conflict between Paul and certain Corinthians. From a social-scientific perspective, the context of Paul's self-defense can be seen as a factional conflict within a small group.⁸³ Paul had recruited the Corinthians; he had been, and still considered himself to be, their leader; he had had status ascribed to him; however, outsiders had challenged his legitimate authority and had threatened his status, and thus his very honor. Paul claimed that these opponents were Hebrews, Israelites, and the seed of Abraham; he used self-praise and comparison in his defense: "So am I!"

It is time to consider Paul's ethnic self-descriptions more carefully. In the Hebrew Bible the term "Hebrew" distinguished the "people of Israel" from the Egyptians (Gen 43:32; Exodus *passim*) and in the New Testament it distinguished them from the Greeks (Acts 6:1). Popular etymology traced the name to Eber, son of Shem (Gen 10:21), among whose descendants was Abraham (Gen 11:16–26). The name "Hebrew" was also associated with a particular homeland, originally the land of Canaan (Gen 40:15). Finally, "Hebrew" was the language spoken by "the Hebrews" (Acts 3x; John 4x; Rev 9:11; 16:16). Although the description "Hebrew" was predominantly used by outsiders (e.g., Gen 39:14, 17; Exod 1:16), it was adopted by insiders (Exod 1:19; Jon 1:9). Grave and synagogue inscriptions at Rome and elsewhere show that Israelites had come to identify themselves ethnically as "Hebrews."⁸⁴

In short, the name "Hebrew" marked off a self-defined ethnic group. It implied archetypal/mythical ancestor-heroes, a homeland, and often a language. In Philippians 3:5 Paul implies that his parents were Hebrews.

Paul's second ethnic self-description is "Israelite," a similar boundary-marking term. An excellent commentary on its meaning for Paul is his own statement in Romans 9:3–5, which highlights "religion":

⁸³ For a fuller discussion, see Dennis C. Duling, "'Egalitarian' Ideology, Leadership, and Factional Conflict within the Matthean Group," *BTB* 27 (1997): 124–37.

⁸⁴ Emil G. Schürer, Geza Vermes, and Fergus Millar, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.–A.D. 135)* (3 vols; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1973), 3:83, 29.

3) For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen by race (κατὰ σάρκα). 4) They are Israelites, and to them belong the sonship, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises; 5) to them belong the patriarchs), and of their race (ἐξ ὧν ["out of them"]) according to the flesh, is the Christ. God who is over all be blessed forever. Amen.

In Galatians 1:14 and 2 Corinthians 11:26, Paul says that the Israelites are his "own people" (ἐν τῷ γένει; ἐκ γένους) which is, again, parallel to the expression of "of the people of Israel" in Philippians 3:5. "People" (γένος) here implies belonging to the same socio-political group with common origins. It suggests ancestral descent from Jacob/Israel. Israel also suggests a common homeland, the "land of Israel," since Jacob/Israel "fathered" the twelve tribes. One of them was Benjamin, Paul's tribe (Phil 3:5). The land of Israel thus became the common Biblical term for the homeland, the land of Canaan, or Palestine. If the Lukan author is correct, Paul was not literally from the land of Israel ("Saul of Tarsus": Acts 9:11; 21:39; 22:3), but as a man of the Diaspora he would have identified himself with his ancestral homeland, perhaps because of his parents (or his father). Certainly he believed he was descended from mythical ancestor-heroes Abraham, Isaac, Jacob/Israel, and Benjamin.⁸⁵ In 2 Corinthians 11:22 Paul boasts that he is of the same ethnic descent as his opponents: "Are they Israelites? So am I!"

Paul's third self-description, "seed of Abraham," has similar nuances; indeed, it is the key to Israelite ethnicity (Gen 11:27–25:11). From the patriarch Abram's seed came Isaac, then Jacob/Israel, then Benjamin, Paul's tribal ancestor (Phil 3:5). Yahweh was the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Although Eber was listed as Abraham's ancestor, and thus Abraham was a "Hebrew," Abraham became the primal patriarch. He was remembered as a Babylonian whose "seed" became the fountainhead of the Israelites as a people, a *genos* (γένος) and an *ethnos* (ἔθνος). It was he who received God's promise that his numerous seed would inherit the land of Canaan as their homeland. It was he who made a covenant with Yahweh, the sign of which was the circumcision of male children on the eighth day. From Abraham's seed came both Ishmael by Hagar, his wife Sarah's maid,

⁸⁵ Shaye J. D. Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness. Boundaries, Variety, Uncertainties* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1999), 273, 305–307.

when Sarah was barren, and Isaac by Sarah herself when they were in their old age. It was he with whom God renewed the covenant that emphasized the promise of his seed and the land, marked by his new God-given name, "Abraham," which was popularly thought to mean "father of the peoples" (Hebrew *'ab-hamôn* [= *gôyîm* = ἔθνη].⁸⁶ It was Abraham's faith that led him to obey God's command to sacrifice his and Sarah's only seed, Isaac, whom God then miraculously saved at the last minute. All ethnic Israelites, then, could be called the "seed of Abraham" (Jer 33:26; 4 Macc 18:1, 23).

Abraham was so central to Paul's way of thinking that he called Christ believers adopted "sons of Abraham" (Gal 3:7; cp. Acts 13:26) and used Sarah and Hagar as allegorical symbols for slave and free. In Philippians 3:5 he identified himself not only as a Hebrew and an Israelite, but in relation to "the eighth day with respect to circumcision," one of the key ways—some scholars say *the* key way⁸⁷—that that Hebrews-Israelites (males) were identified and identified themselves ethnically. By comparing himself with the Superapostles, Paul, "the fool," praises himself: "Are they seed of Abraham? So am I." Again, his comparison sets the stage for his superiority as an apostle in the following *peristasis* catalogue.

Summary and Conclusion

2 Corinthians 10–13 was part of the "tearful letter." It represented the height of a conflict between Paul and the Corinthians. In 11:22 Paul was defending his own ethnicity. His was an ethnic self-definition that had sharp boundaries. It included his view of his *ethnos* and his *genos* and his own set of values. From the perspective of rhetorical comparison, he claimed to be ethnically equal to his opponents. He boasted of it in a human way, despite his reluctance to praise himself.

Paul used self-praise and comparison in 2 Corinthians 11:22. Did he also use irony in this verse? In the verse itself—no. Rhetorical self-praise and comparison seemed to overtake irony in his self-defense and he was forced into it. Yet, the comment occurs in the Fool's

⁸⁶ Cf. Gen 17:4–5.

⁸⁷ David C. Sim, "Christianity and Ethnicity in the Gospel of Matthew" in *Ethnicity and the Bible* (ed. M. Brett; Biblical Interpretation Series 19; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996), 171–95; for an alternative, Duling, "Ethnicity, Ethnocentrism, and the Matthean *Ethnos*."

Speech and his use of the fool is in the final analysis ironic. Most important, the real irony is that Paul did not ultimately place any stock in his ethnic self-praise. Yes, he had inherited the Hebrew culture; yes, he was an Israelite and his *genos* was from the seed of Abraham. In Philippians he added that he was of the tribe of Benjamin and that he followed the norms of Torah and the rite of circumcision. But as he shows in Galatians and Romans there was a different, new *genos* from Abraham, a body of believers “in Christ.” He thought of himself as being leader of *another ethnos*—*ethnos* can mean simply group—one that had different values and symbols. It had broader boundaries. It was a metaphorical ethnicity.⁸⁸

When Paul defended himself at the height of the conflict with the Corinthians, he engaged in a rhetorical defense of his ethnicity “in the flesh.” He became the fool and gave the Fool’s Speech. He used rhetorical comparison and self-praise. He claimed that his stock was as good as that of his opponents. But ultimately, he said, there was nothing to be gained by it (12:1). As he put it in Philippians 3:7–8, “. . . Whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.”

⁸⁸ Bartchy thinks of it as a new family with new brothers and sisters; this implies a new *ethnos*; see S. Scott Bartchy, “Undermining Ancient Patriarchy: The Apostle Paul’s Vision of a Society of Siblings,” *BTB* 29 (1999): 68–78.

THE WORLD OF THOUGHT IN THE PHILIPPIANS HYMN (PHILIPPIANS 2:6–11)

Thomas H. Tobin, S.J.

The purpose of this short study is to explore the world of thought in the Philippians Hymn (Phil 2:6–11). More specifically, I am interested in what the conceptual framework is within which the hymn can be best understood. The secondary literature on the hymn and its background is virtually infinite.¹ Because of this, I obviously cannot deal with all or even most of the issues that bear on the interpretation of the hymn or on its background. I do, however, need to make clear certain decisions that I have made about the hymn. No doubt all of these decisions are disputable, but they are also necessary for an essay of this sort.

First, I take it that Paul did not compose Phil 2:6–11. He probably edited it somewhat, but the hymn itself was something he and the Philippian Christian community already held in common. The most commonly suggested additions by Paul are “death on a cross” (θανάτου δὲ σταυροῦ) in Phil 2:8b and “of those in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth” (ἐπουρανίων καὶ ἐπιγείων καὶ καταχθονίων) in Phil 2:10b. There are two primary reasons for thinking that Paul himself did not compose the hymn itself. First, Paul clearly uses the hymn for paraenetic purposes that go well beyond the scope of the hymn. The hymn itself could service these purposes only if it was already something to which both Paul and the Philippian community had given a certain authority. Second, the hymn itself contains crucial vocabulary not otherwise found in Paul’s genuine letters or not used in the same sense. The three words not found elsewhere in Paul are ἀπαγγέλλω, μορφή, and ὑπερυψόω. In addition, several words in the hymn are used in ways significantly different from the way Paul uses them elsewhere. Two examples will suffice. First, the word σχῆμα appears only one other time in Paul’s letters (1 Cor 7:31). In

¹ For a survey of some of this literature, see Ralph Martin, *A Hymn of Christ: Philippians 2:5–11 in Recent Interpretation and in the Setting of Early Christian Worship* (3rd ed.; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1997).

Phil 2:7d in the hymn it means something like “form” or “outward appearance,” but in 1 Cor 7:31 it means something more like “way of life.”² Second, Paul uses the verb κενόω (to empty) four other times in his letters (Rom 4:14; 1 Cor 1:17; 9:15; 2 Cor 9:3), but it is always in a negative sense.³ Taken together, the concentration of unusual vocabulary in Phil 2:6–11 strongly suggests that Paul was not the author of the hymn.

Second, I take it that it is a hymn and so was used by early Christian communities in some sort of worship context. Whether this was in the context of the eucharist or of baptism is less clear. But its use at communal gatherings obviously would have contributed to the authority the hymn had, such that Paul could appeal to it and expect that his appeal would have carried weight with the Philippian Christians.

Third, I do not find attempts to divide the hymn into strophes convincing. It is a prose hymn, and not unlike non-Christian Greek prose hymns, it cannot be scanned or divided easily into strophes.⁴ Nor are such divisions helpful for deciding what additions or changes Paul himself may have made. As I mentioned above, Paul may well have added the phrases “death on a cross” and “of those in heaven, on the earth, and under the earth.” While I agree with this, my reasons for thinking so are not based on strophes or length of lines but on Paul’s common practice elsewhere (e.g. Rom 1:3–4; 3:23–25) of adding to or commenting on otherwise traditional material.

Finally, it seems to me that Phil 2:6–11 does contain a notion of pre-existence. This is perhaps the most disputable decision. In this I clearly disagree with scholars such as James D. G. Dunn and Jerome Murphy-O’Connor.⁵ My main reason for this is that the contrast between “being in the form of God” in Phil 2:6a and “taking

² See BDAG 981.

³ For a fuller explanation of these and several other words, see Martin, *A Hymn of Christ*, 44, n. 1.

⁴ For example, the aretologies to Isis and Osiris in Diodorus Siculus in *Bibl.* 1.27.4–5; the Isis aretology from Cyme in *IG* 12 supp. 5 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1939), 98–99; and the four hymns of Isidorus to Isis from Medinat Madi in Vera Frederika Vanderlip, *The Four Greek Hymns of Isidorus and the Cult of Isis* (American Studies in Papyrology 12; Toronto: A. M. Hakkert, 1972).

⁵ James D. G. Dunn, *Christology in the Making: A New Testament Inquiry into the Origins of the Doctrine of the Incarnation* (2nd ed.; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1989), xviii–xix, 114–21; Jerome Murphy-O’Connor, “Christological Anthropology in Phil 2.6–11,” *RB* 83 (1976): 25–50.

the form of a servant” in Phil 2:7b cannot finally be explained without appeal to some sort of pre-existence. This contrast seems to be one between states or conditions of existence rather than stages in Christ’s earthly life. This is strengthened by the phrases “born in the likeness of men” (ἐν ὁμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων γενόμενος) in Phil 2:7c and “being found in human appearance” (καὶ σχήματι εὐρεθεὶς ὡς ἄνθρωπος) in Phil 2:7d. Both of these phrases seem to refer to a condition or state of existence rather than to a stage in Christ’s earthly life such as his suffering and death.

If this is granted, the hymn in Phil 2:6–11 seems to envision three states of existence or conditions of Christ. In the first state (Phil 2:6) he is in the “form of God.” In the second state (Phil 2:7–8) he empties himself, takes on the form of a servant, and is obedient to death. Because of this, in the third state (Phil 2:9–11) Christ is raised to the loftiest height above all else in creation. This interpretation of Phil 2:6–11 also highlights the extent to which the use of these three states or conditions of existence in the hymn is of a piece with at least three other hymns in the New Testament: John 1:1–18; Col 1:15–20; and Heb 1:3–4.⁶ Like Phil 2:6–11, these three hymns envision three successive states: a state of pre-existence with God (John 1:1–5, 10–12a; Col 1:15–17; Heb 1:3a–b), an earthly life (John 1:14a–b; Col 1:18a, 20b; Heb 1:3c), and a resurrection/exaltation (John 1:14c–d, 16; Col 1:18b–20; 20a, c; Heb 1:3d–4).

These three texts from John, Colossians, and Hebrews share two other things in common. First, all three connect the first state, the state of pre-existence, not only with being in the realm of the divine but also with having some role in the creation or sustaining of everything else. In John 1:1–3, the *Logos* is not only divine, it is also that through which everything else came into being. In Col 1:16–17, Christ not only “is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation,” but also “in him all things were created,” and “all things were created through him and for him.” Finally, in Heb 1:3 the Son not only is the radiance God’s glory and the imprint of his fundamental reality, he also sustains all things by his powerful word. Just prior to the hymn, the author of Hebrews has referred to the

⁶ This is probably also true of 1 Pet 1:20–21 and may also be true of 2 Cor 8:6 and 1 Tim 3:16. But these three texts are too short and fragmentary to make any claims about states.

Son as the one through whom God created the universe (Heb 1:2). In these three texts then, the *Logos*, Christ, or the Son all play crucial cosmological roles in the creation or sustaining of the universe. Second, although all three hymns are clearly rooted in the Jewish wisdom tradition, specifically in texts such as Prov 8:22–31; Sir 24; and Wisdom 7:21–8:1, none of them can be explained simply on the basis of Jewish wisdom literature. All three texts move well beyond the Jewish wisdom tradition and are part of a broader tradition of Hellenistic Jewish speculation represented by a writer such as Philo of Alexandria.⁷

At first glance, however, this cosmological role as well as its background in Hellenistic Jewish speculation seem to set these three New Testament texts apart from what one finds in Phil 2:6–11. Although Phil 2:6 describes Christ's pre-existence as "being in the form of God," the hymn makes no explicit connection between this and any cosmological role. But there is another and equally important difference between the hymn in Philippians and these other three texts. Quite unlike the pre-existing figure in John, Colossians, and Hebrews, the pre-existing figure of Christ in Philippians thinks and makes decisions. First, although he is in the form of God, he does not think of equality with God as booty (*ἀρπαγμὸν*) but rather empties himself and takes on the form of a servant.⁸ In addition, a bit later in the hymn he is described as being "obedient unto death." Although there is no sense in the hymn that this process of thinking and decision-making is troubling, nevertheless the pre-existent Christ in the Philippians hymn has clearly human-like characteristics in ways that the same figures in the other three texts do not.

If what I have described above about both the similarities and the differences between these four New Testament texts (Phil 2:5–11; John 1:1–18; Col 1:15–20; Heb 1:3–4) is fairly accurate, how does one go about explaining both the similarities and the differences, particularly the lack of a cosmological role and the presence of

⁷ I have shown this in the case of John 1:1–18 in "The Prologue of John and Hellenistic Jewish Speculation," *CBQ* 52 (1990): 252–269. For Col 1:15–20, see Gregory E. Sterling, "Prepositional Metaphysics in Jewish Wisdom: Speculation and Early Christological Hymns," *StPhA* 9 (1997): 219–38. For Heb 1:3–4, see Harold W. Attridge, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1989), 36–48.

⁸ This element of choice is present whether one takes *ἀρπαγμὸν* as something already possessed and so identical with *τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ* or as something to be grasped, in which case *τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ* is not yet possessed.

human-like characteristics in the pre-existing figure in the Philippians hymn? I want to suggest that one needs to turn to the ways that Hellenistic Jewish writers such as Philo of Alexandria dealt with the cosmological figure of the *Logos* and the anthropological figure of the “heavenly man” created in Gen 1:27. I will do this in three steps: (1) the figure of the *Logos* in Philo; (2) the figure of the “heavenly man” in Philo; and finally (3) the eventual merging or assimilation of the two figures in Philo. Finally, I will return to the Philippians hymn itself.

1. *The Figure of the Logos in Philo*

The figure of the *Logos* as it is found in Philo is complex both in terms of its functions and in terms of its origins. The *Logos* is closely connected in a number of passages with the figure of Wisdom in Jewish wisdom literature.⁹ Both the *Logos* and Wisdom are given the same attributes, e.g. image, beginning, vision of God (*Conf.* 146; *Leg.* 1.43). Because of the number of times that this identification occurs, the Jewish wisdom tradition is clearly one of the roots of the concept of the *Logos* in Philo. Similarly the *Logos* in Philo often has some of the attributes of the *Logos* as it was understood in Stoicism. The *Logos* can be that which fills all things with its being (*Her.* 188). The *Logos* can also be described as putting on the world as a garment (*Fug.* 110). In these two passages in Philo, the *Logos*, as in Stoicism, is the principle of rationality that pervades the universe. For example, Diogenes Laertius describes the Stoic view this way:

They [the Stoics] hold that there are two principles in the universe, the active principle and the passive. The passive principle, then, is a substance without quality, that is, matter, whereas the active is the reason (λόγον) inherent in this substance, that is, God. (D. L. 7.134)¹⁰

In this way the function given to the *Logos* in Stoicism is quite similar to that given to Wisdom in Jewish wisdom literature. This functional similarity between the two may well have been one of the initial reasons the *Logos* figure was introduced into Judaism. The *Logos* figure offered educated Jews a way of speaking of Wisdom that was

⁹ *Leg.* 1.65; 2.86; *Som.* 1.65–66; 2.242–45; *Fug.* 97, 109; *Post.* 122; *Deus* 134–35.

¹⁰ See also Cicero, *Nat. D.* 1.36.

comprehensible to educated members of the larger Greco-Roman world, Jews and non-Jews alike.

The very complexity of the *Logos* figure in Philo also indicates that, once the figure had been introduced into Judaism, it became the carrier of a variety of different functions. The figure could be interpreted both as similar to the Stoic principle of rationality and as a further stage of development within Jewish wisdom speculation. All these functions appear in Philo's writings. In addition, any given function might be only vaguely related to the original reasons for its introduction into Jewish religious thought.

While originally connected with Stoicism, the *Logos* also came to be interpreted in a basically Middle Platonic framework which gives very little indication of its Stoic origins. One characteristic of Middle Platonism was the development of an intermediate reality between the primal deity and the sensible world. This intermediate figure also became the home of the Platonic ideas and the means by which the sensible world was ordered.¹¹ In Philo the *Logos* comes to function within just such a Middle Platonic context. First, the *Logos* functions within the Platonic cosmology of the *Timaeus* in which the sensible world is made after the patterns of the ideal world. Terms that Plato used to characterize the world of ideas are now used to characterize the *Logos*: archetype, paradigm, intelligible.¹² The *Logos* becomes the archetypal idea in which all of the other ideas are contained. The *Logos* unifies the world of ideas under one rubric. What had been a realm, the world of ideas, now becomes a figure, the *Logos*.

Second, the *Logos* is an intermediate figure between God and the rest of the created world. The term that is often used in Philo to describe this function is "image" (εἰκών). In Plato there is no comparable intermediate *figure* between the demiurge and the sensible world, only the *ideas* which are paradigms for the objects in the sensible world. However, once one has introduced the *Logos* as the archetypal reality in which all the other ideas are contained, one is forced to characterize its relationship both to the primal deity and to the sensible world. The term that Philo often uses is "image" (εἰκών). In a number of passages, Philo uses this term especially to characterize

¹¹ For a fuller explanation, see John Dillon, *The Middle Platonists* (Ithaca: Cornell University, 1977), 45–49.

¹² ἀρχέτυπον: *Leg.* 3.96; *Opif.* 25; *Spec.* 1.171; 3.83; παράδειγμα: *Leg.* 3.96; *Her.* 231; *Spec.* 3.83; *Det.* 87; *Opif.* 139; νοητός: *Opif.* 139.

the relationship of the *Logos* both to God himself and to the sensible world. For example, in *Leg.* 3.96, Philo writes that, just as God is the Paradigm for the “image” (the *Logos*), so too this image is the paradigm for other beings, that is, the sensible world. In this way, the use of the term “image” brings out the intermediate character of the *Logos*.¹³

Finally, the *Logos* is that through which (δι’ οὗ) the sensible world was made (*Spec.* 1.81). In another passage in Philo the *Logos* is referred to as the “instrument” (ὄργανον) by means of which God made the world and man (*Leg.* 3.96). God created the world by using the *Logos* as his instrument.¹⁴

All three of these characteristics of the *Logos* (unifier of the world of ideas, intermediate figure, and instrument of creation) all place these interpretations of Philo within the development of Middle Platonism in the second half of the first century B.C.E. For our purposes in interpreting the background of the Philippians hymn, it is important to keep in mind that all these functions are cosmological rather than anthropological.

2. The Figure of the “Heavenly Man” in Philo

The second figure we need to look at in Philo is the “heavenly man.” This figure is part of an interpretation in which the creation of the man in Gen 1:27 is distinguished from the creation of the man in Gen 2:7. The first is a “heavenly man,” and the second is an “earthly man.” This double creation of man is an interpretation which tries to explain why the description of the creation of man occurs twice in Genesis. In such an interpretation this is taken to mean that two different “men” were created, the one heavenly and part of the intelligible world, the other earthly and part of the sensible world. The clearest examples of this interpretation are found in *Opif.* 134–35 and *Leg.* 1.31–32.¹⁵ The differences between the two can be set off schematically from each other:

¹³ See also *Opif.* 24–25; *Her.* 230–31; *Spec.* 1.80–81; 3.83, 207.

¹⁴ For a recent analysis of prepositions in a metaphysical context, see Sterling, “Prepositional Metaphysics,” 220–31.

¹⁵ After this he says that “God formed man by taking clay from the earth, and breathed into his face the breath of life” (Gen 2:7). By this also he shows very

A. The "Heavenly Man" of Gen 1:27 B. The "Earthly Man" of Gen 2:7

- | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. intelligible | 1. sense-perceptible |
| 2. idea, genus, seal | 2. partaking of qualities |
| 3. incorporeal | 3. made up of body and soul |
| 4. neither male nor female | 4. male or female |
| 5. by nature immortal | 5. by nature mortal |

Once one becomes aware that the two descriptions of the creation of man are a problem, the interpreter looks at the two descriptions for indications that would allow him to distinguish between the two of them. Two of the characteristics listed above serve as the basis for distinguishing between the two creations. These characteristics are: (1) neither male nor female (Gen 1:27); and (2) composed of body and soul (Gen 2:7). The first characteristic is interpreted to mean that the man created in Gen 1:27 was prior to any sexual differentiation and so incorporeal, part of the intelligible world, and immortal. The second characteristic is interpreted to mean that the man created in Gen 2:7 was a composite being made up of body and soul and so part of the sense-perceptible world, sexually differentiated, and mortal.¹⁶

clearly that there is a vast difference between the man thus formed (τοῦ τε νῦν πλασθέντος ἀνθρώπου) and the man that came into existence earlier after the image of God (τοῦ κατὰ τὴν εἰκόνα θεοῦ γεγονότος πρότερον); for the man so formed is an object of sense perception (αἰσθητός), partaking already of such or such quality (ἡδη μετέχων ποιότητος), consisting of body and soul (ἐκ σώματος καὶ ψυχῆς συνεστώς), man or woman (ἄνθρωπος ἢ γυνή), by nature mortal (φύσει θνητός); while he that was after the image was an idea (ιδέα), or genus (γένος), or seal (σφραγίς), intelligible (νοητός), incorporeal (ἀσώματος), neither male nor female (οὔτε ἄρρεν οὔτε θήλυ), by nature incorruptible (ἄφθαρτος φύσει).

It says, however, that the formation of the individual man, the object of sense, is a composite one made up of earthly substance and of divine spirit (σύνθετον . . . ἐκ τε γεώδους οὐσίας καὶ πνεύματος θείου); for it says that the body was made through the Artificer taking clay and molding out of it a human form, but that the soul was originated from nothing created whatever, but from the Father and Ruler of all; for that which He breathed in was nothing else than a divine spirit that migrated hither from that blissful and happy existence for the benefit of our race, to the end that, even if it is mortal in respect of its visible part, it may in respect of the part that is invisible be rendered immortal. Hence it may with propriety be said that man is the borderland between mortal and immortal nature, partaking of each so far as is needful, and that he was created at once mortal and immortal, mortal in respect of the body, but in respect of the mind immortal (*Opif.* 134–35).

¹⁶ For a fuller explanation of this, see Thomas H. Tobin, *The Creation of Man: Philo and the History of Interpretation* (CBQMS 14; Washington, DC: The Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1983), 108–12.

As a result of this distinction between the two types of men, the concepts that were used as complementary formulations at an earlier stage of interpretation, when the creation of man in Gen 1:27 and 2:7 was taken to refer to the same man, are now distinguished and refer *either* to the intelligible man created in Gen 1:27 *or* to the sensible man created in Gen 2:7. For instance, only the “heavenly man” created in Gen 1:27, the man “after the image,” can be referred to as a “seal” (*Opif.* 134) or as something “stamped with the image of God” (*Leg.* 1:31).

At an earlier stage of interpretation, the man created in Gen 1:27 was the man made “according to the image of God” and that image was the *Logos*. The man so created was an image in the *sensible* world of an idea, a paradigm from the intelligible world. The two figures were easily distinguishable: the *Logos* in the *intelligible* world was the paradigm for the man in the *sensible* world. However, once the man created in Gen 1:27 becomes the “heavenly man,” he is no longer part of the sensible world but, like the *Logos* is part of the intelligible world (*Leg.* 1:31). Although the *Logos* is primarily cosmological and the heavenly man is primarily anthropological, this situation still creates an uneasy relationship between the two figures. The heavenly man retains the characteristic of being formed “after the image of God” (*Opif.* 134; *Leg.* 1:31), but at the same time he also takes on characteristics of the *Logos* in that he too is now an idea, a seal, and belongs to the intelligible world (*Opif.* 134).

In addition, because the man created in Gen 1:27 was a real figure and not simply a paradigm and because he was interpreted as a real figure in prior interpretations (e.g. *Opif.* 24–25; *Leg.* 3.95–96; *Her.* 230–31), the heavenly man created in Gen 1:27 has its own peculiar character. This peculiar character figures prominently in *Leg.* 2.4:

It is not good that any man should be alone. For there are two kinds (γέννη) of men, the one made after the image, and the one molded out of the earth. For the man made after the image it is not good to be alone, because he yearns after the image. For the image of God is a pattern of which copies are made, and every copy longs for that of which it is a copy, and its station is at its side.

The heavenly man here is more than an eternal paradigm; he a real character capable of “yearning after the image,” that is, after the *Logos*. Jewish interpreters were conditioned to treat the “heavenly man” as a real character and not just as a paradigm both because of the text of Gen 1:27, which describes the creation of a real man,

and because previous levels of interpretation whose concepts and vocabulary these interpreters used also thought that Gen 1:27 described the creation of a real man and not a paradigm. This same sense of being a real character, of being more than a paradigm, also emerges in Philo's interpretation of Gen 2:15 in *Leg.* 1.88–89:

“And the Lord God took the man whom he made, and placed him in the garden to till and to guard it” (Gen 2:15). “The man whom God made” (Gen 1:27) differs, as I have said before, from the one that was molded (Gen 2:7): for the one that was molded is the more earthly mind, the one that was made the less material, having no part in perishable matter, endowed with a constitution of a purer and clearer kind. This pure mind, then, God takes, not suffering it to be outside of himself, and having taken it, sets it among the virtues that have roots and put forth shoots, that he may till them and guard them.

Here the heavenly man is much more than a paradigm but also acts by tilling and guarding the virtues.

3. *The Eventual Merging or Assimilation of the Logos and the Heavenly Man in Philo*

Let me now turn to the third step, the eventual merging or assimilation of the figures of the *Logos* and the heavenly man. This merging or assimilation of the two figures to each other occurs especially in three passages from *De Confusione Linguarum* (41, 62, 146). Let me look briefly at each of these passages:

And therefore when I hear those who say “We are all sons of one man (ἐνὸς ἀνθρώπου), we are peaceful” (Gen 42:11), I am filled with admiration for the harmonious concert which their words reveal. “Ah! my friends,” I would say, “how should you not hate war and love peace—you who have enrolled yourselves as children of one and the same father, who is not mortal but immortal—God’s *Man* (ἄνθρωπον θεοῦ), who being the *Logos* of the Eternal (τοῦ αἰδίου) must needs himself be imperishable?” (*Conf.* 41)

In this passage the “one man” mentioned in Gen 42:11 is identified with the immortal man created in Gen 1:27 rather than with the mortal man created in Gen 2:7. In addition, and crucial for our purposes, that immortal man is also identified with the *Logos* of God. The second passage is more complicated:

I have heard also an oracle from the lips of one of the disciples of Moses, which runs thus: "Behold a man (ἄνθρωπος) whose name is the rising" (Zech. 6:12), strangest of titles, surely, if you suppose that a being composed of soul and body is here described. But if you suppose that it is that Incorporeal One (τὸν ἀσώματον ἐκεῖνον), who differs not a whit from the divine image (θείας εἰκόνης), you will agree that the name of "rising" assigned to him quite truly describes him.

For that man is the eldest son, whom the Father of all raised up, and elsewhere calls his first born (πρωτόγονον), and indeed the Son thus begotten followed the ways of his Father, and shaped the different species, looking to the archetypal patterns which that Father supplied. (*Conf.* 62–63)

In this passage Philo is offering an interpretation of Zech 6:12 ("Behold a man whose name is the rising."). According to him the description of this man as "the rising," means that this text can hardly be referring to the man created in Gen 2:7 who is composed of soul and body. Rather it must refer to the incorporeal man created in Gen 1:27. Philo then goes on to identify this man with the "divine image," that is, with God's *Logos*, for it is the *Logos* who is also God's firstborn, his son, and especially the one who gives shape to the different species on the basis of the archetypes furnished by God. This same identification of the *Logos* and the man created in Gen 1:27 is also found in the third and last passage.

But if there be any as yet unfit to be called a Son of God, let him press to take his place under God's First-born, the *Logos* (τὸν πρωτόγονον αὐτοῦ λόγον), who holds the highest rank among the angels, their ruler as it were. And many names are his, for he is called, "the Beginning," and the Name of God and his *Logos*, and the Man after his image, and "he that sees," that is Israel. (*Conf.* 146)

The reason for Philo's conflation of the "heavenly man" created in Gen 1:27 with the *Logos* as well as with the other figures is not altogether clear. But it probably reflects Philo's attempt to draw together disparate speculative traditions in which especially the "heavenly man," the *Logos*, and Wisdom came to play similar or functionally equivalent roles in the creation and maintenance of the cosmos.¹⁷

For our purposes, there are several things to be noted about these passages. First, Philo's use of the first-person singular in *Conf.* 41 and

¹⁷ For a fuller explanation of this phenomenon, see Tobin, *The Creation of Man*, 139–42.

also in *Conf.* 62 suggests that we are dealing here with the work of Philo himself. The plethora of titles represents Philo's effort to draw together and integrate, at least partially, interpretations which came from a number of sources. Second, Philo is merging together or assimilating to one another the previously distinct figures of the *Logos* and the heavenly man. Third, in this process the two figures of the *Logos* and the heavenly man each take on attributes previously associated with the other. On the one hand, the heavenly man takes on cosmological characteristics otherwise restricted to the *Logos*. The heavenly man can now be described as following the ways of his Father by shaping the different species by looking to the archetypal paradigms provided by the Father (*Conf.* 63). On the other hand, the *Logos* comes to be described in much more personal or, if you will, "human" terms. The *Logos* is now described as God's first-born son (τὸν πρωτόγονον αὐτοῦ λόγον) who holds the highest rank among the angels, indeed their ruler. The relationship of the *Logos*/heavenly man to the Platonic paradigms or archetypes is now relatively minor (*Conf.* 63). Instead, the dominant concept Philo uses is that of filiation. The *Logos*/heavenly man is the first-born son of the Father (*Conf.* 62, 146).

4. *The Interpretation of the Philippians Hymn*

With all of this in mind, let us now return to the interpretation of Phil 2:6–11. Here I would like to make four points. First, while there is no clear reason to think that the author of the hymn was familiar with the works of Philo himself, there is reason to think that the author was aware of the kind of speculation represented by these passages from Philo. The evidence for this is found in 1 Cor 15:44–49. Gregory E. Sterling has shown that these verses show a knowledge of the distinction between the "heavenly man" created in Gen 1:27 and the "earthly man" created in Gen 2:7 found in *Opif.* 134–35 and *Leg.* 1.31–32.¹⁸ On this basis, one can at least say that, even apart from the evidence provided by Phil 2:6–11 itself, the kind of speculation found in these texts from Philo was known in the circles in which Paul moved. How this kind of speculation first became known

¹⁸ Gregory E. Sterling, "'Wisdom among the perfect': Creation Traditions in Alexandrian Judaism and Corinthian Christianity," *NovT* 37 (1995): 355–84.

to early Christians is difficult to say and lies beyond the scope of this essay. But it is clear that such speculation was known to Paul and the circles in which he moved.¹⁹

Second, the speculation about the *Logos* and the heavenly man as they are found in these Philonic texts as well as in Phil 2:6–11, John 1:1–18; Col 1:15–20; and Heb 1:3–4 show that the speculation about these two figures was part of the same larger tradition of interpretation. This also helps to explain the similarities between Phil 2:6–11 and John 1:1–18; Col 1:15–20; and Heb 1:3–4. All four texts represent Christian reflection on and appropriation of the same larger tradition of Hellenistic Jewish speculation. This is particularly the case for the first of the three states of existence (pre-existence) found in all four Christian texts.

Third, these texts from Philo contribute to our understanding of what is peculiar in Phil 2:6–11 in relation to the other three Christian texts. The figure in Phil 2:6–11 exists first of all in the realm of the divine. This is also the case with the figures in the other three texts. But the pre-existent figure described in Phil 2:6–11 does not play an explicitly cosmological role in the creation of the world. In addition, it exhibits obviously personal or human-like characteristics lacking in the pre-existent state in these other three texts. The reason for this is that the author of Phil 2:6–11, although part of this larger tradition of Hellenistic Jewish speculation, is nevertheless drawing on a distinct strand of interpretation within that larger tradition. This strand is that of the heavenly man rather than that of the *Logos*.

Finally, and this is admittedly more speculative, these texts in Philo may help to explain why Phil 2:6–11, when compared to John 1:1–18; Col 1:15–20; and Heb 1:3–4, is an outlier in the sense that the other three texts much more clearly use the language and vocabulary of Hellenistic Jewish speculation associated with the *Logos* than does Phil 2:6–11. It is difficult to date any of these four hymns. Paul's letter to the Philippians, however, was probably written in the mid-50's of the first century. In addition, because Paul could appeal to the authority of the hymn in Phil 2:6–11, the composition of the hymn itself probably took place sometime earlier, perhaps in the 40's of the first century. This means that this hymn was probably earlier than the hymns in Colossians, the Gospel of John, or the Letter to the Hebrews.

¹⁹ See Sterling, "‘Wisdom among the perfect,’" 355–84.

If Phil 2:6–11 indeed is the earliest of the four texts, it may offer us some clues about why it is also an outlier. Because Jesus was clearly a human being, the most obvious connection with this tradition of Hellenistic Jewish speculation would have been through the figure of the heavenly man. The speculation about the first Adam and last Adam in 1 Cor 15:45–49 attests to this. But the eventual amalgamation in this speculative tradition of the figures of the *Logos* and the heavenly man found in *Conf.* 41, 62–63, 146, would have offered an interpretative bridge by means of which the pre-existing reality of Christ found in Phil 2:6–11 could have taken on the much more cosmological role found in John 1:1–18; Col 1:15–20; and Heb 1:3–4. This more cosmological role then became the dominant one as early Christianity developed. Because of this Phil 2:6–11 became our only extant representative of the earlier attempt by Christian interpreters to connect Jesus with the heavenly man rather than directly with the *Logos*.

In conclusion, while admittedly speculative, it seems to me that placing Phil 2:6–11 within the larger context of Hellenistic Jewish and then Christian speculation offers important insights into both the interpretation of Phil 2:6–11 and of its place within emerging Christian speculation about the pre-existence of Christ found also in John 1:1–18; Col 1:15–20; and Heb 1:3–4.

PAUL'S PNEUMATOLOGICAL STATEMENTS AND ANCIENT MEDICAL TEXTS

Troy W. Martin

1. *Dedication*

I am pleased to dedicate this essay to Prof. David E. Aune. I first encountered David early in my graduate studies at The University of Chicago by noticing that his name appeared on the borrower's card of every book I found in the library. I remember wondering if he had read every book from and about the ancient world. Then, I began to read his own publications and was further convinced of the comprehensiveness of his scholarship. I finally met David in person at a meeting of the Chicago Society of Biblical Research and was immediately taken by his friendliness and encouragement to a beginning scholar, and I have enjoyed our professional relationship ever since. After David left Saint Xavier University and I assumed the Biblical Studies position there, someone asked me if I had replaced David Aune. I responded, "No, but I have moved into his former office." I had already discovered that David was not replaceable unless, of course, one possessed encyclopedic knowledge of the ancient world. Although I possess no such knowledge, I am pleased to dedicate this essay to someone who does.

2. *Introduction*

Studies of Pauline pneumatology demonstrate the methodological importance of contextualizing Paul's pneumatological statements. In these studies, context includes not only the immediate literary context but also and more importantly the conceptual context of Paul's statements about *pneuma*. Thus, James Dunn emphasizes the theological context of Paul's pneumatological statements while Gordon Fee concentrates on the experiential and Friedrich W. Horn focuses on the

history-of-religions context of these same statements.¹ The conclusions reached in these studies underscore the significance of context for understanding Pauline pneumatology. Dunn's theological emphasis leads him to describe Paul's conception of the Holy Spirit primarily as one of the three aspects of the beginning of salvation. Fee's concentration on the experiential context predisposes him to portray Paul's understanding of the Holy Spirit as God's empowering presence. Horn's focus on the history-of-religions context brings him to the conclusion that the Holy Spirit for Paul is both the functional and material (*stofflich*) down payment (*Angeld*; 2 Cor 1:22; 5:5; Rom 8:23). The works of Dunn, Fee, and Horn are representative of other studies on Pauline pneumatology that demonstrate the methodological importance of context.

The purpose of the present essay is not to evaluate the merits of these various contextual proposals but simply to introduce a contextual consideration that has yet to enter the discussion in any significant way.² Ancient medical texts frequently present physiological conceptions of *pneuma* that provide a productive context for understanding Paul's pneumatological statements. In particular, these texts present ways in which *pneuma* enters the human body and produces dynamic, rational, health-giving, and life-giving effects. Obviously, what these texts mean by *pneuma* differs from Paul's conception of the Holy Spirit. Nevertheless, the similarities between these texts and Paul's pneumatological statements are striking and illuminating. Following a brief description of the physiological conception of *pneuma* in these texts, the present essay will describe some of the more interesting similarities between these texts and Paul's statements about the Spirit.

¹ James D. G. Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 413–441; Gordon D. Fee, *God's Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), *passim*; Friedrich Wilhelm Horn, *Das Angeld des Geistes: Studien zur paulinischen Pneumatologie* (FRLANT 154; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1992), *passim*.

² An exception is Dale B. Martin's *The Corinthian Body* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995). Martin discusses many of the same medical texts as the present essay regarding the role of *pneuma* "in and around the human body" (p. xiii). He (pp. 21–25) has a concise discussion of the "pneumatic body" that correctly assesses *pneuma* as "a kind of 'stuff' that is the agent of perception, motion, and life itself." Although working with similar medical texts, the present essay attempts neither to correlate this medical understanding with Paul's higher-status, upper class opponents nor to limit the discussion to issues arising only in Paul's Letter to the Corinthians.

3. *The Ancient Physiology of Pneuma*

3.1. *Reception of the Spirit*

Surprising for us moderns, ancient medical texts place *pneuma* in the category of nutrition (τροφή). One Hippocratic author writes a treatise on nutrition and discusses liquid nutrients such as beverages and solid nutrients such as foods. Then, he makes the surprising assertion that *pneuma* in the form of breath is also a nutrient.³ Another author explains, “Now bodies, of men and of animals generally, are nourished by three kinds of nourishment, and the names thereof are solid food, drink, and wind (πνεῦμα).”⁴ Of these three essential nutrients, *pneuma* is the most important, for a person without food can live a few months and without water a few days but without *pneuma* only a few minutes. This author concludes that the greatest nutritive bodily need is *pneuma* and probably recommends to patients, “Drink plenty of fluids, eat balanced meals, and always remember to breathe.”⁵

Various theories exist about how the body receives the nutriment of *pneuma*. Options include the pores of the skin, the digestive system, and the oro-nasal passages as the ports of entry for *pneuma*. T. Clifford Allbutt credits Philistion (5th to 4th century B.C.E.) with the notion that *pneuma* was drawn in by the pores all over the body and Diocles of Carystus (3rd century B.C.E.) with supposing that the *pneuma* entered partly through the stomach.⁶ One Hippocratic treatise discusses the porousness of the body for respiration (Ἀραιότης σώματος ἐξ διαπνοίην), and another treatise explains that both *pneuma* and food pass through the intestines.⁷ The majority of ancient medical texts, however, opt for oro-nasal respiration.⁸ One text explains

³ CH., *Alim.* 48. One Hippocratic author (*Flat.* 3.4–5) explains the relationship by saying, “Wind (πνεῦμα) in bodies is called breath (φῦσα), but outside of bodies [wind is called] air (ἀήρ).”

⁴ CH., *Flat.* 3.1–4 (Jones, LCL).

⁵ CH., *Flat.* 4.3–11.

⁶ T. Clifford Allbutt, *Greek Medicine in Rome: The Fitzpatrick Lectures on the History of Medicine Delivered at the Royal College of Physicians of London in 1909–1910 with Other Historical Essays* (New York: Benjamin Blom, 1921), 109–110, 235–236, 239. See also James Longrigg, (*Greek Medicine From the Heroic to the Hellenistic Age: A Source Book* [New York: Routledge, 1998], 81–82). Plato (*Tim.* 79) also describes the pores of the skin as ports of entry for *pneuma*.

⁷ CH., *Alim.* 28.1 and *Morb.* 3.14.

⁸ Ancient anatomists disagree over the purpose of respiration. Galen, (*De usu respirationis* 1.2–3; Translated by Philip J. van der Eijk, *Diocles of Carystus: A Collection*

that the nutriment of *pneuma* flows into the body through the “nostrils, mouth, throat, lungs, and the transpiratory system generally.”⁹ Once the *pneuma* leaves the lungs, these texts disagree over whether the *pneuma* then travels to and nourishes the brain or the heart. This difference of opinion arises over whether the brain or the heart is the seat of intelligence and rationality.¹⁰

The Hippocratic texts generally and the Alexandrian anatomists in particular hold the brain to be the seat of intelligence.¹¹ The author of *The Sacred Disease* reasons:

For when a human draws in *pneuma*, it arrives first in the brain, and thus the air is dispersed into the remaining [members of the] body after having deposited in the brain its highest part, namely the part that could have understanding and the means of knowing. . . . If [the air] were to arrive in the body first and afterwards in the brain, it would after depositing discernment in the flesh and the veins come into the brain hot and not pure but mixed with the moisture both from the fleshly parts and from the blood so that [the air] would no longer be perfect.¹²

Whereas this author relies primarily on theory, the Alexandrian anatomists Herophilus of Chalcedon (330/320–260/250 B.C.E.) and

of the Fragments with Translation and Commentary [Studies in Ancient Medicine 22; 2 vols.; Leiden: Brill, 2000], 1:65–66) discusses Asclepiades’ assertion that respiration forms the soul itself, Philistion and Diocles’ notion that it cooled the innate heat, and Hippocrates’ position that it both nourished and cooled. See David J. Furley and J. S. Wilkie, eds., *Galen on Respiration and the Arteries* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984). For Aristotle and the Lyceum in general, spirit was transmitted with the seed and was not inbreathed. Respiration served merely to cool the innate heat of the heart. See Allbutt, *Greek Medicine in Rome*, 227–228. Allbutt (p. 250) states, “The interminable but vital controversy between the theory of animal Heat by internal combustion and the doctrine of Innate Heat is one of the most . . . cardinal conflicts of ideas in the history of medicine.”

⁹ CH., *Alim.* 30. See also *Morb. sacr.* 7.

¹⁰ Allbutt (*Greek Medicine in Rome*, 252) understands Diocles of Carystus as holding an intermediate position in which the heart makes the psychic *pneuma* but then delivers it to the brain, the organ of the special senses, even though the heart remained the center of intelligence. Longrigg (*Greek Medicine*, 76) is more cautious about Diocles’ actual position but explains, “The brain supplies the contents of both sensation and intelligence, but it is the heart which hears and understands.”

¹¹ Allbutt (*Greek Medicine in Rome*, 251) comments, “The still and bloodless brain (‘bloodless and cold,’ Arist. *Hist. an.* 495a) appeared to the ancients rather as a chilling than a quickening body. . . . We may wonder indeed how, in the conceptions of certain Hippocrateans, of certain of the school of Croton, and of others of the pre-Aristotelian period before the nerves were discovered, the brain held its own as the seat of the understanding. It held its own chiefly because the special senses especially the chief senses of sight and hearing, had their seats about it, and by certain ‘ducts’ that obviously led into it (Alcmaeon).”

¹² CH., *Morb. sacr.* 19.10–21 (my translation). See also 10.13–15.

Erasistratus of Ceos (3rd century B.C.E.) rely more on empirical observation and receive permission from Ptolemy to dissect cadavers and even living criminals.¹³ Through their dissections, they discover the nervous system, distinguish motor from sensory nerves, and postulate the brain as the organ of perception and bodily activity.¹⁴ Erasistratus cautiously proposes, "All the nerves grow out of the brain, and, speaking generally, the brain seems to be the source of bodily activity."¹⁵ Even the author of *The Sacred Disease* that agrees with them is forced to admit, "Some people say that the heart is the organ with which we think, and that it feels pain and anxiety."¹⁶ Erasistratus' caution is due to the overwhelming popular belief that the heart, not the brain, through the activity of the *pneuma* was responsible for perception and purposive motion. Consequently, the "novel" ideas of the Alexandrian anatomists are not popularly accepted.

Diocles of Carystus (3rd century B.C.E.) and Praxagoras of Cos (4th century B.C.E.) were two of the most prominent medical authorities in antiquity, and they both held the heart to be the center of cognition and volition. When discussing the causes of phrenitis (delirium), an anonymous manuscript recognizes that Erasistratus and Hippocrates attribute the disease to a brain disorder but states, "Praxagoras says that phrenitis is an inflammation of the heart, whose natural activity, indeed, he believes to be reasoning, and that when the heart is disturbed because of this inflammation, it becomes productive of this affection." This manuscript further states, "Diocles says that phrenitis is an inflammation of the diaphragm (he gives this name to the affection on the basis of the place [affected]), not of the activity [affected]), the heart being affected simultaneously (for he, too, seems to posit reasoning around this [i.e. the heart])."¹⁷ Under the influence

¹³ For ancient authors both commending and condemning the practice of vivisection, see Longrigg, *Greek Medicine*, 84–86.

¹⁴ For Herophilus as the discoverer of the nervous system, see F. Solmsen, "Greek Philosophy and the Discovery of the Nerves," *Museum Helveticum* 18 (1961): 184–197. Rufus (*On the Naming of the Parts of Man* 149–150; Charles Daremberg and Charles Émile Ruelle, *Oeuvres de Rufus d'Éphèse* [Paris: l'Imprimerie Nationale, 1879; repr., Amsterdam, 1963], 153; Longrigg, [*Greek Medicine*, 88, text VII.9]) states, "Herophilus also calls . . . the excrescences from the brain . . . sensory and purposive (i.e. motor) nerves, through which sensory and purposive motion and all bodily action are accomplished."

¹⁵ Erasistratus, Fr. 289. Quoted in Galen, *De placitis Hippocratis et Platonis* 7.3. Translated by Longrigg, *Greek Medicine*, 93, text VII.16.

¹⁶ CH., *Morb. sacr.* 20 (Jones, LCL).

¹⁷ Anonymous of Paris, *De morbis acutis et chroniis* 1; Translated by Eijk, *Diocles of Carystus*, 143.

of these and other medical authorities, therefore, the heart was popularly viewed as the seat of intellectual activity.¹⁸

The general belief was that the *pneuma* leaves the lungs and travels to the heart, which nourishes the entire body through the system of veins and arteries.¹⁹ Praxagoras of Cos first distinguishes arteries from veins and the Alexandrian Anatomists Herophilus and Erasistratus advance his distinction.²⁰ Herophilus notes that arteries do not collapse at death as do the veins since their walls are six times thicker. Galen (2nd century C.E.) describes Erasistratus' developed understanding by writing:

Erasistratus believes that the artery is the vessel of the *pneuma*, the vein that of the blood. The larger vessels are continually divided into smaller but more numerous vessels and are carried all over the body; for there is no place where there does not exist a termination of a vessel. They finally come to an end in such minute terminations that by the closure of their extreme orifices the blood is held constrained within them. In consequence, the blood remains in its own boundaries [i.e. in the veins] and nowhere encroaches on the vessels of the *pneuma* [i.e. the arteries].²¹

Thus, the ancients are aware of the heart's pumping action but do not think the arteries are connected to the veins or that the blood circulates.²² Instead, the heart pumps blood into the veins where the blood remains until it is congealed into flesh.²³ The ancients view the veins as irrigation ditches.²⁴ Just as the water flows through the

¹⁸ For others who opted for the heart, see Longrigg, *Greek Medicine*, 76, 174.

¹⁹ Galen (*De placitis Hippocratis et Platonis* 1.6; Translated by Longrigg, *Greek Medicine*, 77) criticizes Praxagoras and Aristotle for declaring the heart to be the source of nerves. Galen is mistaken because the nerves were not discovered until later by Herophilus.

²⁰ Longrigg, *Greek Medicine*, 144.

²¹ Galen (*De uenae sectione aduersus Erasistratum* 3; Translated by Longrigg, *Greek Medicine*, 95).

²² A general belief among ancient doctors was that the veins originated in the liver, which produced the blood, even though the heart pumped this blood to all parts of the body.

²³ One Hippocratic author (CH., *Loc. hom.* 3 [Potter, LCL]) describes the termination of veins in the body and says, "There are vessels [veins] that have their terminus at the vertex of the head. . . . Two . . . end at the corners of the eyes. . . . Two other vessels pass . . . between the temples . . . and are always throbbing, for they are the only vessels that do not dispense their moisture, so that the blood is turned back out of them; on turning back it clashes with the new blood that is flowing to them; and the blood that turns back tries to flow up the vessel, while the new blood that is coming from above tries to flow down the vessel, and both currents . . . produce a pulsation in the vessels."

²⁴ For this metaphor, see Longrigg, *Greek Medicine*, 95. This is a common metaphor

ditches and is absorbed by the earth, so also the blood flows through the veins and is absorbed by the various bodily parts. Thus, the heart provides liquid and solid nourishment to the body by keeping a steady supply of blood in the veins.

Whereas the heart pumps blood into the veins, it pumps *pneuma* into the arteries, which contain no blood.²⁵ One author reasons, "The greatest amount of heat is in the vessels [arteries] and heart, and for this reason the heart, being the hottest part in a person, holds the breath (πνεῦμα) . . . The heart and the hollow vessels [arteries] are in constant movement."²⁶ This same author asserts that the heart holds the *pneuma* but more importantly distributes, dispenses, manages and regulates the *pneuma*.²⁷ Furthermore, this author states that from the two hollow vessels [arteries] that come out of the heart, "other vessels [arteries] branch off through the whole body."²⁸ Another author elaborates, "Root of veins, liver; root of arteries, heart. Out of these travel to all parts blood and breath (πνεῦμα)."²⁹ Thus, the heart is the bodily organ responsible for nourishing the body with *pneuma* through the arteries.³⁰

3.2. *Pneumatic Movement and Rationality*

Even though these ancient medical authors disagree over whether the *pneuma* first enters the brain or the heart, they completely agree that *pneuma* in the human body causes movement, rationality, health,

that is already found in LevR 15 (116a²). I am grateful to Dr. Annette Weissenrieder for this reference. See her extremely important and useful work *Images of Illness in the Gospel of Luke: Insights of Ancient Medical Texts* (WUNT 2/164; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003).

²⁵ Before Praxagoras of Cos (4th century B.C.E.) distinguished veins and arteries, the notion was that the spirit flowed along with the blood. Later doctors who believed the arteries also carried blood believed that the spirit flowed along with the blood. See Galen, *On Fullness* 11; cited by Longrigg, *Greek Medicine*, 88. Erasistratus recognized that blood spurts from arteries when they are cut but explained the phenomenon as the spirit's rapid evacuation that leaves a vacuum that draws the blood from the surrounding tissue. See Longrigg, *Greek Medicine*, 95–96.

²⁶ CH., *Carn.* 6.1–5.

²⁷ CH., *Carn.* 5.10–11.

²⁸ CH., *Carn.* 5.7–25.

²⁹ CH., *Alim.* 31.1–3 (Jones, LCL).

³⁰ Vindicianus (*On the Seed* 41; Translated by Longrigg, *Greek Medicine*, 76) states, "The controlling principle of the soul is located in the heart, which through the fineness of the breath is disseminated throughout the whole body."

and life. The author of *Breaths* is one of the Sophistic authors in the Hippocratic corpus and illustrates the cosmological speculation about *pneuma* by writing:

It (πνεῦμα) is the most powerful of all and in all, and it is worth while examining its power. . . . Trees are torn up by the roots through the force of the wind (πνεῦμα), the sea swells into waves, and vessels of vast bulk are tossed about. Such then is the power that it has in these things, but it is invisible to sight, though visible to reason. For what can take place without it? In what is it not present? What does it not accompany? For everything between heaven and earth is full of wind (πνεῦμα).³¹

According to this author and in the ancient view generally, *pneuma* is the force that moves all things, and without *pneuma*, nothing moves. The dynamic operation of *pneuma* in the cosmic macrocosm is analogous to the operation of *pneuma* in the human body's microcosm.³² This same Hippocratic author explains the relationship by saying, "Wind (πνεῦμα) in bodies is called breath (φῦσα), but outside of bodies [wind (πνεῦμα) is called] air (ἀήρ)."³³ Whether inside the body and called breath or outside the body and called air, *pneuma* is the cause of movement in both the cosmological macrocosm and in the bodily microcosm. Hermann Kleinknecht aptly comments on *pneuma*, "Profane Gk. firmly maintains the basic etym. idea of a powerful, material, moving breath with its many functions in man and the cosmos. . . . The characteristic feature of the Gk. concept of spirit . . . is that of something which is elementally dynamic."³⁴

Praxagoras of Cos and Diocles of Carystus both designate the arteries as the vessels through which the heart transmits voluntary motion to the body.³⁵ The author of *The Sacred Disease* explains the general conception of the body's pneumatic movement by saying, "For when a man takes in breath (πνεῦμα) by the mouth or nostrils . . . the air that goes into the lungs and the veins is of use when it enters

³¹ CH., *Flat.* 3.6–18 (Jones, LCL). On p. 224, Jones discusses the problems of translating *pneuma*.

³² For examples, see Plato's *Phaed.* 112b and Heraclitus' *Ep.* 6.7–20 in Abraham J. Malherbe's *The Cynic Epistles* (SBLSPS 12; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1977), 198–199. It should be noted that the notions of the macrocosm and microcosm only arise in late antiquity after the time of the texts examined in the present essay.

³³ CH., *Flat.* 3.4–5 (Jones, LCL).

³⁴ Hermann Kleinknecht, "πνεῦμα," *TDNT* 6:337–338.

³⁵ Longrigg, *Greek Medicine*, 115, 121.

the cavities . . . thus causing . . . movement of the limbs.”³⁶ This same author attributes paralysis to a stoppage of *pneuma* in the body. He states:

By these veins we take in the greater part of our breath (πνεῦμα), for they are vents of our body drawing the air to themselves, and they spread it over the body in general through the minor veins and cool it; then they breath it out again. For the breath (πνεῦμα) cannot rest [stand still], but moves up and down. If it is caught anywhere and rests [stands still], that part of the body where it rests becomes paralyzed. A proof is that should minor veins be so compressed, when a man is lying or seated, that the breath (πνεῦμα) cannot pass through the vein, a numbness immediately seizes him.”³⁷

The ancient physicians are absolutely convinced that the *pneuma* causes bodily movement, for, as this author concludes, “when the veins are cut off from the air . . . the patient is rendered speechless and senseless.”³⁸ Indeed, suffocation or stoppage of *pneuma* soon leads to the body’s complete and continued stillness as these medical writers astutely ascertain.

Ancient physiology attributes not only movement but also rationality to the operation of *pneuma*.³⁹ The author of *The Sacred Disease* holds the brain as the center of intelligence and states, “When a man takes in breath (πνεῦμα) by the mouth or nostrils . . . the air . . . is of use when it enters . . . the brain, thus causing intelligence (φρόνησιν).”⁴⁰ This same author asserts that the brain “is the first of the bodily organs to perceive the intelligence (φρονήσιος) coming from the air.”⁴¹ Another author who holds the heart as the center of intelligence counters, “There is a thick vein [artery] in each breast. These things have the largest part in understanding (ξυνέσιος).”⁴²

³⁶ CH., *Morb. sacr.* 10.13–14, 21–24 (Jones, LCL). CH., *De arte*. 10 describes bodily limbs as having hollow cavities surrounded by muscles but filled with spirit. Apparently, the pneumatic pressure and not the muscles provides movement.

³⁷ CH., *Morb. sacr.* 7.1–12 (Jones, LCL). Praxagoras and Diocles held similar views. See Longrigg, *Greek Medicine*, 115, 121.

³⁸ CH., *Morb. sacr.* 10.24–27 (Jones, LCL).

³⁹ Allbutt (*Greek Medicine in Rome*, 236) credits Diogenes of Apollonia (4th century BCE) with first conceiving or at least carrying forward “the idea of thought as a universal bodily function fed by air in the blood-vessels.”

⁴⁰ CH., *Morb. sacr.* 10.13–14, 21–24 (Jones, LCL).

⁴¹ CH., *Morb. sacr.* 20.29–31 (Jones, LCL).

⁴² CH., *Epid.* 2.6.19.1–2 (Smith, LCL).

Whether or not intelligence is located in the brain or the heart, however, *pneuma* is responsible for human rationality.

3.3. *Pneumatic Health and Life*

Along with movement and rationality, *pneuma* also provides health to the body. A basic axiom of ancient medicine is that disease is an imbalance in the body, especially in the bodily fluids known as humours. The role of the *pneuma* in maintaining or restoring balance is crucial. One physician describes the healthy condition of a human being as “a movement . . . produced . . . by breath (πνεῦμα), warmth and coction of the humours.”⁴³ Another describes the role of *pneuma* in removing an overabundant secretion that destroys health.⁴⁴ Yet another describes the body as having many hollow parts that in health are filled with *pneuma* but in disease with fluid.⁴⁵ These authors’ frequent mention of how a patient breathes emphasizes the role of *pneuma* in providing health to the body. Good respiration provides a prognosis of recovery from disease, but deep and rapid respiration is a sign the body is not fighting the disease successfully.⁴⁶ According to these authors, “those who will recover breath easily . . . those who will die have difficulty in breathing.”⁴⁷ Thus, the *pneuma* plays a crucial role in the health of the body.

In the final analysis, moreover, *pneuma* imparts life to the body. The author who states plainly that spirit is the cause of life explains, “So great is the need of wind (πνεῦμα) for all bodies that . . . if the wind (πνεῦμα) passages into the body be cut off he [the person] will die in a brief part of a day.”⁴⁸ Constricted breathing is a very fatal sign,⁴⁹ and when the lungs fill with fluid and no longer draw *pneuma* into the body, death soon follows.⁵⁰ Indeed, the boundary of death is reached when “there passes away all at once the breath (πνεῦμα) of the heat . . . into the whole [universe] again, partly though the

⁴³ CH., *Praec.* 9.13–17 (Jones, LCL).

⁴⁴ CH., *Vict.* 2.66.23–35.

⁴⁵ CH., *De arte.* 10.9–12.

⁴⁶ CH., *Progn.* 5.1–9; 15.14, 25. See also CH., *Alim.* 48.1–5.

⁴⁷ CH., *Progn.* 20.32–37.

⁴⁸ CH., *Flat.* 4.1–9 (Jones, LCL).

⁴⁹ CH., *Epid.* 7.107.14–15.

⁵⁰ CH., *Morb.* 1.12.1–16.

flesh and partly through the breathing organs in the head, whence we call it the 'breath of life.'"⁵¹

The physiology of *pneuma* presented in these medical texts provides an interesting context for several of Paul's pneumatological statements about the reception of the Holy Spirit and the Spirit's function in providing movement, rationality, health, and life. Indeed, the presentation of *pneuma* in these ancient medical texts provides a productively coherent context in which to read Paul's pneumatological statements.⁵²

4. *Paul's Pneumatological Statements*

4.1. *Reception of the Spirit*

In Paul's pneumatology, the reception of the spirit is the decided difference between his converts' pre-Christian existence and their new life in Christ. Dunn comments on Rom 8:9, "In this verse, in fact, Paul provides the nearest thing to a definition of a Christian (someone who is 'of Christ'). And the definition is in terms of the Spirit. It is 'having the Spirit' which defines and determines someone as being 'of Christ.'"⁵³ Reception of the Spirit is thus crucially important to Pauline pneumatology and asking how the Spirit enters Paul's new converts is a significant question. The ancient physiology of *pneuma* identifies three options for the entry of *pneuma* that are reflected in Paul's statements: the oro-nasal passages, the pores of the skin, and the digestive system.

Reception of the Spirit through the oro-nasal passages is not clearly attested in any of Paul's pneumatological statements. Nevertheless, certain questions in Gal 3:1–5 may reflect the reception of the Spirit through the oro-nasal passages if the scenario in Galatia resembles events at the household of Cornelius in Acts 10.⁵⁴ Twice, Paul asks

⁵¹ CH., *Aph.* 7 (Appendix) 29–35 (Jones, LCL).

⁵² Martin (*Corinthian Body*, p. 134) recognizes the importance of these medical texts and comments, "Paul's theology is constrained by his physiology."

⁵³ Dunn, *Theology of Paul*, 423.

⁵⁴ John 20:22 presupposes the reception of the Spirit through the oro-nasal passages. Mark 15:39 may also be an example of this means of the Spirit's transfer if the centurion is baptized with the Spirit that Jesus exhales. This understanding of the entry of divine *pneuma* into a person was also known outside of Christianity.

the Galatians if they received the Spirit through the hearing of faith. Fee comments on these questions, "Even though Paul seldom mentions any of the visible evidences of the Spirit in such contexts as these, here is the demonstration that the experience of the Spirit in the Pauline churches was very much as that described and understood by Luke."⁵⁵ If the reception of the Spirit in Galatia happened as Luke describes the events at the household of Cornelius in Acts 10, then Gal 3:1–5 may reflect the entrance of the Spirit through the oro-nasal passages.⁵⁶

However, caution is advised not only because of the problem of interpreting Paul in the light of Acts but also because the author of Acts elsewhere distinguishes Paul's understanding of the reception of the Spirit from the events at Cornelius' household. In Acts 19, this author records Paul's encountering some disciples at Ephesus. Paul asks them if they received the Holy Spirit when they believed. After they answer that they had not, Paul then asks them into what baptism they were baptized. Learning that they were baptized with John's baptism, Paul baptized them in the name of the Lord Jesus and laid hands on them. At this point, they received the Holy Spirit. Thus, the author of Acts closely associates Paul's understanding of the reception of the Spirit through the pores of the skin in baptism and the laying-on of hands rather than simply through the oro-nasal passages in hearing of faith as at the household of Cornelius. Gal 3:1–5, therefore, may reflect an understanding of the reception of the Spirit through the oro-nasal passages, but certain other explicit pneumatological statements in Paul's letters reflect alternative means for the entrance of the Spirit.

Paul's association of the reception of the Spirit with water baptism in 1 Cor 12:13a implicates the pores of the moistened skin as

Vergil (*Aen.* 6.46–51; Kevin Guinagh, *The Aeneid of Vergil: Newly Translated with an Introduction by Kevin Guinagh* [New York: Rinehart, 1953], 138) writes, "As she [Deiphobe, priestess of Phoebus and Hecate] stood speaking before the entrance neither her face nor her color was the same, nor did her hair stay arranged, but her breast panted and her heart swelled in uncontrolled frenzy. She became larger, nor was her voice human, since she was breathed upon by the power of the god, now closer to her."

⁵⁵ Fee, *God's Empowering Presence*, 383–384.

⁵⁶ Another option is entrance through the pores of the skin. The author of Acts parallels many features of the Cornelius narrative with events at Pentecost in which the Spirit in the form of flames of fire sat upon each of them. The language could envision reception of the Spirit through the pores of the skin.

the pores of the Spirit's entry into the human body.⁵⁷ The author of *Nutriments* writes that moisture is the vehicle of nutriment and without moisture the body cannot assimilate nutriment.⁵⁸ Thus, water baptism is necessary for receiving the nutriment of Spirit. This means of entry is not unknown in the Christian tradition, for Mark's account of Jesus' baptism also implicates the moistened pores as the entrance of the Spirit. Mark 1:10 recounts that as Jesus stepped out (ἀναβαίνων ἐκ) of the water, the Spirit stepped into (καταβαίνον εἰς) him. Since baptism does not involve drinking the holy water until later among the Gnostics and Mandaeans but rather involves immersing the body in water, the baptismal reception of the Spirit in 1 Cor 12:13a does not reflect an understanding of the Spirit's entry through the digestive system or through the oro-nasal passages but rather through the pores of the moistened skin.

Not every Pauline pneumatological statement, however, reflects the Spirit's entry through the pores of the skin, for Paul associates the reception of the Spirit with the Eucharist in 1 Cor 12:13b when he states, "ἐν πνεύμα ἑποτίσθημεν." Paul's ambiguous language in this verse creates a disagreement over whether he refers to baptism or to the Eucharist. Many scholars understand the language to refer to baptism and translate, "we were *imbued* with the Spirit." C. K. Barrett thinks this interpretation is more likely because ἑποτίσθημεν is aorist tense, which does not refer "to a repeated act (as the Supper would be)."⁵⁹ Hans-Josef Klauck disagrees, explains the aorist as ingressive,

⁵⁷ Horn (*Das Angelnd*, 172–175) comments, "Pl setzt jedenfalls als in der Gemeinde bekannt voraus, daß der Geist mit einer Substanz, einer Flüssigkeit vergleichbar ist, die dem Glaubenden sacramental inkorporiert worden ist, die damit die neue Substanz seiner Existenz geworden ist." Mehrdad Fatehi (*The Spirit's Relation to the Risen Lord in Paul* [WUNT 2/128; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000], 168–169) disagrees and prefers to understand the Spirit in functional or relational categories as does also Volker Rabens ("The Development of Pauline Pneumatology: A Response to F. W. Horn," *BZ* n.s. 43[1999]: 169–172). Rabens (p. 176) criticizes Horn's terminology by writing, "Not only is the definition of substance as 'forma substantialis' and its differentiation from *Stoff* extremely vague; but the relation of Spirit as function to Spirit as substance and *Stoff* is also not spelled out." The basis of this disagreement over the nature of the Spirit lies in the metaphorical degree of Paul's statements. Fatehi and Rabens assess the statements as being more metaphorical than in Horn's assessment. The ancient medical context of these statements permits these statements to be interpreted either literally or metaphorically, for even if the statements are completely metaphorical, the ancient physiology of *pneuma* provides the perceived reality from which the metaphors arise.

⁵⁸ Ch., *Alim.* 55.1 (Jones, LCL).

⁵⁹ C. K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Harpers New

interprets the verb as a reference to Eucharist, and translates, "we were made to drink one Spirit."⁶⁰ In physiological terms, this disagreement centers on the reception of the Spirit in Baptism through the pores of the skin or in the Eucharist through the digestive system. Since the verb ποτίζω can mean *to imbue* or *irrigate* land or *to give someone something to drink*, both sides in this disagreement find support. Considering Paul's description of the Corinthians as God's field, the translation "to imbue" or "to water" is possible. Nevertheless, Klauck's interpretive linking of baptism in 10:2 with the Eucharistic drink in 10:4 is a cogent argument for interpreting ἐποτίσθημεν as a reference to drinking the Spirit in the Eucharist in 12:13b, which follows the mention of baptism in 12:13a.

Indeed, Paul's discussion of the Eucharist in 1 Cor 10:3–4 reflects the entry of the Spirit through the digestive system. The one who eats the spiritual bread and drinks the spiritual drink receives the Spirit. Horn explains, "Es kann schwerlich bestritten werden, daß Pl hierbei ein realistisches Sakramentsverständnis bekundet, daß also der Geist substanzhaft mit der Speise übereignet wird. . . . 1. Kor 12,13b . . . belegt, daß Pl im Sakramentsgeschehen eine substanzhafte Übereignung des πνεύμα gegeben sieht."⁶¹ Klauck adds, "Paulus trifft sich mit seinen Adressaten insofern, als auch er die Elemente Träger des Pneumatischen sein läßt."⁶² Even though not all exegetes would agree with Horn or Klauck, the Eucharistic reception of the three necessary nutrients of solid food, liquid beverage, and Spirit through the digestive system correlates well with the understanding of nutrition in the ancient medical texts.

Interpreting Paul's pneumatological statements in the light of ancient medical texts, therefore, identifies three options for the reception of

Testament Commentaries; New York: Harper and Row, 1968), 289. See also G. J. Cuming, "ΕΠΟΤΙΣΘΗΜΕΝ (1 Corinthians 12.13)," *NTS* 27 (1981): 283–285.

⁶⁰ Hans-Josef Klauck, *Herrenmahl und Hellenistischer Kult: Eine religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung zum ersten Korintherbrief* (NTAbh n.f. 15; Münster: Aschendorff, 1982), 334–335. Klauck evaluates other arguments against both positions.

⁶¹ Horn, *Angeld*, 169–170. Rabens ("The Development of Pauline Pneumatology," 163 n. 5) translates and interprets Horn's position by writing, "Horn defines his locution 'the Spirit as the substance of the new being' more closely only in the context of his discussion of 1 Cor: 'Paul . . . presupposes that the church is familiar with the fact that the Spirit is comparable to a substance or fluid which has been incorporated sacramentally into the believer; it has thus become the new substance of his existence.' (175; cf. 400)."

⁶² Klauck, *Herrenmahl*, 257.

the Spirit in these statements. The questions of Gal 3:1–5 may reflect entrance through the oro-nasal passages in the hearing of faith, but more explicit statements in other Pauline passages reflect entrance through the pores of the moistened skin in baptism and through the digestive system in the Eucharist. In baptism, the Spirit initially enters the body through the moistened pores, and in the Eucharist, the Spirit is replenished by repeatedly entering the human body through the digestive system. Klauck aptly describes this physiological understanding of the reception of the Spirit when he writes, “Er [der Geist] wird ihr (der Gemeinde) eingestiftet durch die pneumahaltigen sakramentalen Zeichen, durch die Taufhandlung und die eucharistischen Gaben.”⁶³ The ancient medical texts thus provide an interesting and productive context for understanding Paul’s pneumatological statements about the reception of the Spirit.

4.2. *Spiritual Movement and Rationality*

Several of Paul’s pneumatological statements relate that once the Spirit enters the Christian, it travels to the heart as in some of the ancient medical texts and produces movement and rationality. In Gal 4:6, Paul writes, “God sent the Spirit of His son into our hearts, and the Spirit cries, ‘Abba, Father.’” In Rom 5:5, Paul asserts, “The love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, which was given to us.” These statements agree with the ancient physiological conception that *pneuma* after entering the human body locates primarily in the heart, the center of human volition and cognition. The heart then dispenses and regulates the Spirit throughout the entire body so that Paul can exhort the Thessalonians (1 Thess 5:19) not to quench the Spirit. Paul can also affirm in 1 Cor 6:19, “Your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit.” What Paul affirms earlier in 1 Cor 3:16 about the community being the temple of the Holy Spirit, he now affirms about the individual members of the community.

Several of Paul’s statements attributing movement and rationality to this indwelling Spirit are very consistent with the ancient physiology of *pneuma*. In Rom 8:14, Paul proposes that the children of God are led (ἄγονται) by the Spirit of God. The nature of this leading

⁶³ Klauck, *Herrenmahl*, 334.

is ambiguous. Hans Conzelmann comments on 1 Cor 12:2, "The significance of the words (ἀν)άγειν and ἀπάγειν allows of no certain conclusion. The phrase certainly implies that they were not their own masters."⁶⁴ Udo Borse contrasts the Corinthians' being driven by dumb idols as heathens to their being led by God's Spirit as Christians.⁶⁵ Conzelmann and Borse suggest that being led by the Spirit of God goes beyond gentle inducement to a forceful impetus that motivates in a certain direction. Aristotle presents a similar notion of leading when he writes, "Though the former universal judgment says 'Avoid that thing,' the desire leads (ἄγει) you to it (since desire can put the various parts of the body in motion)."⁶⁶ These notions of leading as a motivation or impetus to action fit well with Rom 8:14.

The leading of the Spirit as the motivating force also fits well with other assertions Paul makes. Paul's comments that those led by the Spirit walk by the Spirit and not by the flesh (Gal 5:16–18; Rom 8:4) and produce the fruits of the Spirit rather than accomplish the works of the flesh (Gal 5:22–14). The Spirit moves those it leads to speak (1 Cor 12:3), to perform miracles (Gal 3:5), and to engage in gifts of ministry (1 Cor 12:4–11). According to Pauline pneumatology, the Spirit is indeed the motivating force in the Christian life.

Several of Paul's pneumatological statements imply that the Spirit provides not only movement but also rationality for Christians. The Spirit is the instrument that circumcises the heart, the center of human rationality (Rom 2:29).⁶⁷ Those who walk according to the

⁶⁴ Hans Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians: A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975), 205.

⁶⁵ Udo Borse, "ἄγω," *EDNT* 1.25.

⁶⁶ Aristotle, *Eth. nic.* 7.3.10 (Rackham, LCL).

⁶⁷ The prepositional phrase ἐν πνεύματι could be translated as "in the spirit" and designate the human spirit as the inward sphere in which the circumcision occurs. Three considerations, however, favor the translation "by the Spirit" as the divine agent of the circumcision. First, the pre-Pauline tradition knows of circumcision of human ears (Jer 6:10), lips (Exod 6:12, 30), and heart but not of circumcision of the human spirit. Second, Paul contrasts Spirit and letter in other texts, such as Rom 7:6 and 2 Cor 3: 6–8. Each time, the context clearly contrasts the Holy Spirit and the letter of the Mosaic Law, and English translations appropriately capitalize the word *Spirit* in these texts. Third, later traditions specify the Holy Spirit as the instrument of the circumcision of the heart. Ode 11:1–2 in *The Odes of Solomon*, perhaps the earliest Christian hymnbook, reads, "My heart was pruned . . . for the Most High circumcised me by His Holy Spirit."

Spirit set their minds (φρονοῦσιν) on the things of the Spirit in contrast to those who walk according to the flesh and set their minds on the things of the flesh (Rom 8:5). What the rulers of this age do not understand (1 Cor 2:8), Christians understand because of God's revelation through the Spirit (1 Cor 2:10). Only those who have the Spirit of God understand the gifts of God, for "no one has known the things of God except the Spirit of God" (1 Cor 2:11–14). Indeed, the spiritual have the rationality of Christ (1 Cor 2:16).

Considering the ancient physiology of *pneuma*, Paul's pneumatological statements describe the Spirit's traveling to the heart where it is dispensed to all parts of the body. Physiologically consonant with the ancient medical texts are Pauline statements such as "For the Spirit searches all things even the deep things of God. For who of humans knows the things of a human except the spirit of the human in the human" (1 Cor 2:10–11). According to the ancient medical texts, *pneuma* provides movement by exerting pneumatic pressure in the hollow parts of the body. Consistent with this understanding is Paul's exhortation to the Thessalonians not to quench (σβέννυτε) the Spirit (1 Thess 5:19) and thereby hamper the Spirit's ability to move those in the community. The Spirit provides rationality by bringing the mind of Christ to the human heart, the center of human volition and cognition (1 Cor 2:16). Paul's presentation of the Spirit as the provider of movement and rationality is thus consonant with the ancient physiology of *pneuma*, but so is Paul's presentation of the Spirit as the provider of health and life.

4.3. *Spiritual Health and Life*

Paul's pneumatological statements reflect the ancient physiology of *pneuma* in attributing health and life to the Spirit. A key Pauline passage is the discussion of the Eucharist in 1 Cor 11:27–34, which connects both health and life to the Spirit. This passage does not emphasize the spiritual food and drink as does 1 Cor 10:3–4 but instead concentrates on the activities of eating and drinking. This passage exhorts each person to examine her/himself before eating and drinking to avoid consuming judgment in her/himself (1 Cor 11:28–29a). This passage states that those "not discerning the body" are weak and sick and a sufficient number have died (vv. 29b–30). A comment by Ignatius of Antioch leads many scholars to interpret

this key Pauline passage against the background of ancient magic.⁶⁸ However, the emphasis on eating and drinking and the lack of any magical features point to the ancient medical discussion of nutrition as a more natural interpretive context.

In the ancient medical texts, proper eating and drinking are essential for both health and life. These texts recognize that correct nutrition depends not on some fixed list of healthy and unhealthy foods but on the nature or constitution of the individual.⁶⁹ The author of *Affections* recommends, "Administer both food and drink to patients in accordance with their body and their spirit (ψυχή); for in this way they are helped most."⁷⁰ This same author instructs, "If you make your administrations to patients in accordance with their disease and their body, the body will consume the foods in due course and be neither in want nor overfull; if, however, you miss the right measure either in one direction or in the other, in both cases harm will be done."⁷¹

In addition to the constitution of the individual, the specific condition of the person determines proper eating and drinking. When sick, a person should avoid some foods that can be eaten when she/he is well. The author of *Airs, Waters Places* notes:

A man in health and strength can drink any water that is at hand without distinction (μὴδὲν διακρίνειν), but he who because of disease wishes to drink the most suitable can best attain health in the following way. Those whose digestive organs are hard and easily heated will gain benefit from the sweetest, lightest and most sparkling waters. But those whose bellies are soft, moist, and phlegmatic, benefit from the hardest, most harsh and saltish waters, for these are the best to dry them up. For waters that are best for cooking and most solvent naturally loosen the digestive organs the most and relax them; but harsh waters, hard and very bad for cooking, contract most these organs and dry them up . . . so that the digestive organs too are stiffened by them rather than loosened.⁷²

Similarly, the author of *Ancient Medicine* determines the proper diet by correlating the various powers inherent in different foods with the three possible modes of living, namely being in health or falling

⁶⁸ Ign. *Trall.* 6.2. See Klauck, *Herrenmahl*, 327–328.

⁶⁹ See for example, Ch. *Vet. med.* 20.17–34 (Jones, LCL).

⁷⁰ Ch. *Aff.* 46.4–7 (Potter, LCL).

⁷¹ Ch. *Aff.* 47.44–48 (Potter, LCL).

⁷² Ch. *Aer.* 7.80–100 (Jones, LCL).

into or recovering from disease.⁷³ The author of *Epidemics* reports on the case of a man who dined and drank too much when he was hot. He became seriously ill and suffered acute fever with pains all over and died eleven days later.⁷⁴ In these ancient medical texts, therefore, proper nutrition depends on both the natural constitution and the present condition of the person.

A person's failure to consider both her/his constitution and condition in deciding what and when to eat and drink has serious consequences. The author of *Affections* warns, "If the foods and drinks that are most nourishing to the body and most sufficient for nourishment and health are employed at an inopportune moment or in an excessive amount, diseases result and, from the diseases, deaths."⁷⁵ The author of *Ancient Medicine* explains:

The ancients too seem to me to have sought for nourishment that harmonized with their constitution, and . . . to adapt all to the constitution and power of man, thinking that from foods which, being too strong, the human constitution cannot assimilate when eaten, will come pain, disease, and death, while from such as can be assimilated will come nourishment, growth and health.⁷⁶

Hence, proper nutrition results in health while improper nutrition contrary to a person's constitution and condition leads to serious consequences such as disease and death.

This ancient medical discussion of nutrition illuminates Paul's exhortation that each person at the Eucharist should examine her/himself before eating and drinking to avoid consuming judgment in her/himself (1 Cor 11:28–29a). The food and drink consumed in the Eucharist is spiritual food and drink and consequently very powerful. Consuming such food with an unworthy constitution or in an unworthy condition is harmful. The author of *Ancient Medicine* further explains, "It is the strength of each thing [food or drink], that which, being too powerful for the human constitution, it cannot assimilate, which causes harm."⁷⁷ Paul correctly notes that whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord unworthily is guilty of [not assimilating]

⁷³ Ch. *Vet. med.* 14.13–14 (Jones, LCL). For examples of the various powers of certain foods, see Ch., *Acut.* 50.1–20 (Jones, LCL) and *Aff.* 47.1–9 (Potter, LCL).

⁷⁴ Ch., *Epid.* 1.26.289–308.

⁷⁵ Ch. *Aff.* 50.1–6 (Potter, LCL).

⁷⁶ Ch. *Vet. med.* 3.21–48 (Jones, LCL).

⁷⁷ Ch. *Vet. med.* 14.23–25 (Jones, LCL).

the body and blood of the Lord (11:27). This guilt results in a judgment against the physical body (11:29; κρίμα ἑαυτῷ).⁷⁸ Consuming foods and beverages that the body cannot assimilate causes weakness (depletion) in the body and the unassimilated excess (repletion) causes sickness, an imbalance in the body.⁷⁹ Both weakness and sickness can result in death as Paul correctly notes (11:30). From the ancient nutritional point of view, therefore, Paul's statements appropriately warn the Eucharistic participants to examine their constitution and condition before partaking of the spiritually powerful Eucharistic foods.

As in the ancient physiology of *pneuma*, Paul's Eucharistic statements in 1 Cor 11:27–34 assume the health-giving and life-giving role of the Spirit. These statements do not explicitly mention the Spirit when describing the effects of eating and drinking unworthily. Nevertheless, the Spirit or the lack of the Spirit is probably the cause of these serious consequences, for the spiritual food and the spiri-

⁷⁸ Deciding whether τὸ σῶμα in 1 Cor 11:29 refers to the human body or to the Lord's body is difficult since physiologically both options are possible. If the body is the human's mentioned in v. 28, then μὴ διακρίνων in v. 29 refers to a failure to determine the constitution and condition of one's own body when deciding to eat or drink. If the body is the Lord's mentioned in v. 27, however, then διακρίνων in v. 29 refers to the actual process of digestion. The verb διακρίνω often occurs in the Hippocratic Corpus with the meaning to separate substances into their component parts. See for example, CH., *Nat. hom.* 12.7–28; *Epid.* 6.8.6.1–10; cf. *Epid.* 2.3.17.1–8. Digestion requires the separation of foods into their component parts so that the lighter can be assimilated and the heavier can pass through and be discharged. The author of *Nutriments* writes, "Liquid nutriment more easily changed than solid; solid nutriment more easily changed than liquid. That which is hardly altered is hard of digestion, and that which is easily added is easy of digestion" (Ch., *Alim.* 49.1–4 [Jones, LCL]). The author of *Affections* explains, "When one of these [foods] comes into the cavity, the body draws out of it what is suitable of itself" (Ch., *Aff.* 47.51–53 [Potter, LCL]). If the body in v. 29 is the Lord's, then μὴ διακρίνων refers to a failure to break down the Eucharistic foods so that the appropriate parts can be assimilated.

⁷⁹ One author explains depletion and repletion by writing, "If the matter were simple . . . and both sick and well were hurt by too strong foods, benefited and nourished by weaker foods, there would be no difficulty. For recourse to weaker food must have secured a great degree of safety. But as it is, if a man takes insufficient food, the mistake is as great as that of excess, and harms the man just as much. For abstinence has upon the human constitution a most powerful effect, to enervate, to weaken and to kill. Depletion produces many other evils, different from those of repletion, but just as severe. Wherefore the greater complexity of these ills requires a more exact method of treatment. For it is necessary to aim at some measure. But no measure, neither number nor weight, by reference to which knowledge can be made exact, can be found except bodily feeling (τοῦ σώματος τὴν αἰσθησιν)." *Vet. med.* 9.1–18 (Jones, LCL).

tual drink consumed in the Eucharist replenish the Spirit through the digestive system and the Spirit cannot nourish a person whose constitution or condition prohibits the assimilation of these spiritual foods. Lacking the Spirit, such a person becomes weak or sick and will ultimately die if the lack of nourishment continues. According to statements in 1 Cor 11:27–34, only by partaking of the Eucharist in a worthy manner can a person avoid these serious consequences and enjoy the health and the life provided by the Spirit.

Statements in still other Pauline passages emphasize the life-giving effect of the Spirit. Paul writes to the Romans that the law of the Spirit of life sets them free from the law of sin and death (Rom 8:2). He explains to them that God, who raised Christ from the dead, will give life to their mortal bodies through his Spirit, which dwells in them (Rom 8:11). Paul communicates to the Corinthians that the last Adam has become a life-giving Spirit (1 Cor 15:45) and that it is the Spirit that gives life (2 Cor 3:6). Paul writes to the Galatians that the one who sows to the Spirit will ultimately reap eternal life from the Spirit (Gal 6:8). Reflecting the ancient physiology of *pneuma*, these statements correctly emphasize that the Spirit provides not only health but also life to those in Christ. Those who possess the Spirit enjoy health and life while those who lack the Spirit suffer sickness and death.

Conclusion

The present essay demonstrates that the physiology of *pneuma* presented in the ancient medical texts provides an interesting and cogent context for understanding Paul's pneumatological statements. Consonant with an ancient view of *pneuma*, several of these statements address the reception of the Spirit and reflect an entry through the oro-nasal passages in the hearing of faith or through the pores of the body in baptism or through the digestive system in the Eucharist. These statements portray the initial reception of the Spirit in the hearing of faith and baptism but the continued reception of the Spirit through the spiritual food and drink of the Eucharist. Once the Spirit enters the body, several Pauline statements affirm that the Spirit causes movement, effects rationality, provides health, and imparts life. In their conception of the Spirit's entry and function in the human

body, therefore, Paul's pneumatological statements reflect the physiology of *pneuma* in ancient medical texts, and these texts provide a productively coherent context in which to read Paul's statements about the Spirit. Consequently, the ancient medical texts hopefully will no longer be so neglected in the contextual considerations of Pauline pneumatology.

PART TWO

GOSPELS/ACTS

‘LISTENING POSTS’ ALONG THE WAY:
‘SYNCHRONISMS’ AS METALEPTIC PROMPTS
TO THE ‘CONTINUITY OF THE NARRATIVE’ IN
POLYBIUS’ *HISTORIES* AND IN LUKE’S GOSPEL-ACTS.
A TRIBUTE TO DAVID E. AUNE

David P. Moessner

For the Hellenistic writers, Polybius of Megalopolis and Luke the Evangelist, the one Divine Reality/true God has brought together unprecedented historical circumstances that have coalesced into a new and unrivalled state of affairs.

Previously the doings of the world had been, so to say, dispersed, as they were held together by no unity of initiative, results or locality; but ever since this date history has been an organic whole (σωματοειδῇ συμβαίνει γίνεσθαι τὴν ἱστορίαν), and the affairs of Italy and Africa have been interlinked (συμπλέκεσθαι τε τὰς . . . πράξεις) with those of Greece and Asia, all leading up to one end (τέλος).¹
[*The Histories* 1.3.3–4]

But what God proclaimed in advance through the mouth of all the prophets, that his Messiah was to suffer (παθεῖν τὸν χριστὸν αὐτοῦ), he has thus fulfilled. Change your whole way of thinking, therefore, and turn around in order that your sins might be blotted out such that times of refreshment might come from the presence of the Lord and that he might send to us Messiah Jesus—whom he had appointed beforehand—whom heaven must [now] receive until the times of the restoration of all things (χρόνων ἀποκαταστάσεως πάντων) which God spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from the earliest times. [Acts 3:18–21]²

The narratives of each author, then, must make clear how these pattern-shattering³/‘eschatological’ events of a divine ‘plan’ took place in a

¹ Polybius, *The Histories* (vol. 1; trans. W. R. Paton; LCL; London/New York: Heinemann/Putnam’s Sons, 1922). All translations are Paton’s unless otherwise indicated.

² All translations of NT texts are my own.

³ For Polybius’ view of ‘the cycle of political forms’ (πολιτειῶν ἀνακύκλωσις), see F. W. Walbank, “Polybius and the past,” *Polybius, Rome and the Hellenistic World*.

manner in which Hellenistic auditors can comprehend. Accordingly, each composer must work with a set of narrative-poetic building blocks and rhetorical devices which will lead their audience to the same points of viewing and conclusions that they themselves as engaged authors wish to purvey.

One of the many such rhetorical-poetics ploys of Polybius is his 'synchronisms.' Though historians like Ephorus of Cyrene⁴ before him had already utilized 'chronological conjunctions' to coerce audiences to view in tandem what would otherwise be widely disparate if not historically impossible events to link together,⁵ Polybius is the first extant historian to employ synchronisms as critical 'listening posts' for his audience. By bringing together syn-chronically within his narrative widely separated and ostensibly unrelated happenings in different parts of the world, the Achaean historian prompts his audience to hear this most unusual convergence of nations and events as the machinations and orchestrations of a divine fate and Fortune which produced Rome's mercurial ascendancy to world domination. As Walbank puts it, "in describing her handiwork in detail he [Polybius] is at pains to underline the clues which *Tyche* distributed in the form of synchronisms . . . not simply as a *Hilfsmittel* for the reader, but as a sign that *Tyche* is actively effecting a change in human affairs."⁶

We shall see that Luke, too, develops synchronisms beyond any of his Synoptic predecessors. By conjoining Roman and Jewish rulers

Essays and Reflections (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 185–87. Rome's "mixed constitution" retarded the "revolving wheel" of this "social development." Cf. idem, "The idea of decline in Polybius," *Polybius, Rome and the Hellenistic World*, 193–211: "'*Tyche*' is frequently little more than a verbal elaboration, a way of speaking or a rhetorical flourish; but in the case of Rome's rise to power he [Polybius] seems, exceptionally, to have invested the process with a teleological character and to have treated the popular Hellenistic goddess as something akin to the Stoic Providence" (p. 195); G. W. Trompf, "Polybius and the Elementary Models of Historical Recurrence in the Classical Tradition," *The Idea of Historical Recurrence in Western Thought from Antiquity to the Reformation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), 60–115; Trompf, "Polybius and the Elementary Models," 112, writes, "Appeals to recurrent configurations or operative principles afforded a way of disclosing 'the meaning of history.'"

⁴ See below under Polybius' use of synchronisms of main events with auxiliary events that are treated somewhat later in the ongoing continuity of his narrative.

⁵ Walbank, "Polybius and the past," 178–192, here on 182 notes, "Synchronisms were already a recognized feature of Hellenistic historiography. Duris [of Samos], for instance, opened his work with the synchronous deaths of Amyntas of Macedonia, Agesipolis of Sparta and Jason of Pherae."

⁶ Walbank, "Polybius and the past," 182.

and happenings with his prime actors and events, Luke leads his audience to comprehend the most unlikely, ironic development that it was actually God's 'will' that Israel reject their own Savior, Messiah Jesus. Precisely through this unprecedented, indeed 'un-orthodox' means, Israel is to realize its own eschatological calling to be a light of salvation to the rest of the world.

To accomplish this larger narrative purpose, Luke intends to compose a narrative better suited than his predecessors' in illumining his audience of those momentous yet difficult "events come to fruition in our midst" (Luke 1:1), and to do so, he will configure "all these events" in two interlocking volumes,⁷ subsumed to an overarching "plan of God."⁸ In comparing his narrative "arrangement" to "many others,"⁹ Luke distinguishes his "sequence" as one that will lead the likes of a Theophilus on the paths to "certain clarity" (καθεξῆς σοι γράψαι κράτιστε Θεόφιλε ἵνα ἐπιγνῶς περὶ ὧν κατηχήθης λόγων τὴν ἀσφάλειαν, Luke 1:3b–4). Whatever else καθεξῆς σοι γράψαι may mean in detail, Luke certainly ties its "sense" directly to the "referent" of intended impact on his audience, especially since ἡ ἀσφάλεια combines both the *senses* of "clarity" (σαφήνεια) and "security" (ἀσφαλής). The *peroratio* of Acts 2.36, for instance, makes this double-edged sense unmistakable as Peter clinches the argument in Luke's arrangement of his speech by appealing to the "whole house of Israel": "Let the whole house of Israel know therefore with *clear certainty* (ἀσφαλῶς οὖν

⁷ ≈ [=] "corresponds to": Luke 3:21–24:53 ≈ Acts 1:1–2; Luke 24:13–43 ≈ Acts 1:3; Luke 24:36–49 ≈ Acts 1:4–5; Luke 24:50–51 ≈ Acts 1:6–11; Luke 24:52–53 ≈ Acts 1:12–14. Moreover, the opening address to "Theophilus" in the second (Acts 1:1–2) appeals directly to the same Theophilus of the first volume (Luke 1:3) and indicates that this "new" volume is a continuation of the "first" (τὸν μὲν πρῶτον λόγον . . . ὧν ἤρξατο ὁ Ἰησοῦς . . . [Acts 1:1]).

⁸ Cf. Luke 7:30; Acts 2:23; 4:28; (5:38); 13:36; 20:27; (27:42–43).

For an illuminating treatment of this notion in several Hellenistic writers, including Diodorus, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Josephus, and Luke, see J. T. Squires (*The Plan of God in Luke-Acts* [SNTSMS 76; Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1993]), esp. 15–52. Squires compares the formulations of providence and divine control over history in the various writers but does not treat the narrative epistemology which shapes the more comprehensive narrative configurations of those formulations; for the comparison of Josephus' notion of divinely motivated history with Polybius', see, e.g., A. M. Eckstein, "Josephus and Polybius: A Reconsideration," *Classical Antiquity* 9 (1990): 175–208, e.g., on *Tyche*, "certainty as to the Greek source of this Josephan motif cannot be achieved . . . but given the similarities between the Polybian and Josephan concepts of *Tyche*, and the similar focus on *Tyche*'s role in Rome's supremacy, Polybius is the obvious candidate" (p. 202).

⁹ πολλοὶ ἐπεχείρησαν ἀνατάξασθαι διήγησιν.

γνωσκέτω πᾶς οἶκος Ἰσραήλ)¹⁰ that God established him as both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified”).¹¹ Something, then, about the narrative arrangements of the “many” Luke finds wanting; Luke’s goal to effect a “firmer grasp” thus becomes a telling clue to his own motivation to write (Luke 1:4).¹²

This little glimpse into Hellenistic history writing is offered in gratitude to the enormous contribution that Professor David E. Aune has made to antiquity and biblical studies. Through both the breathtaking depth and breadth of his grasp of biblical, Jewish, and Greco-Roman texts, he has been able to lead his readers into new and uncharted territory by conjuring up new vistas of ‘clear certainty’ as he bridges the worlds of Greco-Roman and Jewish history, thought, and apocalypse.¹³ We are indeed greatly in his debt.

1. *Syn-chronisms as Metaleptic Prompts in Polybius’ Histories*

Undoubtedly one of Polybius’ greatest contributions to the more traditional region-by-region format of history writing (κατὰ μέρος/κατὰ ἰδίαν/κατὰ γένος) is his innovative employment of synchronisms in

¹⁰ Cf. the only other instance of ἀσφάλεια in Luke-Acts in Acts 5:23 with its literal sense and referent, “the securely locked” prison gates! Cf. Bauer on ἀσφαλῶς in Acts 2:36: “know beyond a doubt”; RSV—“know assuredly”; cf. adjectival senses linked with verbs of “understanding” and “writing” just as with “His Excellency, Theophilus” in Luke 1:4: e.g., Acts 25:26—Festus [“His Excellency,”! Acts 26:25] does not have anything “firmly grasped” about the accusations against Paul “in order to write” his superior [ἀσφαλες τι γράψαι]. He therefore needs further illumination from those who are competent to judge Paul’s case; cf. Acts 21:34; 22:30).

¹¹ Thus, unlike the direct criticism of other Hellenistic historians who in their *prooimia* promote their own strengths over against alleged weaknesses of their rivals, Luke presents only an oblique critique of his predecessors.

¹² Luke’s propensity to link the events of Jesus and of the church to “fulfillments” of Israel’s events and prophecies according to their scriptures is well documented and embodies a ‘wholeness’ of events ensembled like no other narrative account: e.g., the “completions” of a period of time which themselves introduce a new stage of fulfillment in Israel’s festal calendar or Torah observance or promises of the prophets—Luke 2.21, 22–24, 34; 3.3–6, 15–16; 4.16–21; 9.28–31, 51; 10.23–24; 12.49–53; 13.31–35; 17.22–35; 18.31–34; 19.41–44; 22.14–18, 28–30, 35–38; 24.25–27, 44–49; Acts 1.20–22; 2.1; 3.22–26, etc; see esp. W. Kurz, “Promise and Fulfillment in Hellenistic Jewish Narratives and in Luke and Acts,” *Jesus and the Heritage of Israel. Luke’s Narrative Claim upon Israel’s Legacy* (ed. D. P. Moessner; Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1999), 147–70.

¹³ Two outstanding examples of this depth combined with breadth are David E. Aune’s *Prophecy in Early Christianity and the Ancient Mediterranean World* (1983) and *The New Testament in its Literary Environment* (1987); see the list of his works in this volume.

Books 1–6 which become much more than the decorative book-ends or mnemonic devices of his predecessors.¹⁴ Though the world is not yet united through Fortune's maneuverings (cf. Books 7ff.), Polybius wants his auditors during these earlier periods to anticipate the new era after 218 B.C.E. when the discrete affairs of individual nations will have issued in a "common result (τέλος/συντέλεια)." Such synchronisms become undisguised 'listening stations' to lure his auditors to the author's way of hearing what would otherwise sound like totally coincidental occurrences.

1.1. *Synchronisms of the Main Event with an Auxiliary Event Treated Later in the Narrative*

A synchronism utilized already by one of his predecessors, Ephorus of Cyme, but augmented significantly by Polybius is the alignment of a main event of the 'continuity of the narrative'¹⁵ with an auxiliary event which, in some fashion, will be featured later. Because in Books 4 and 5 Polybius laces each year with two synchronisms of this type, the reader is being prepared to view these earlier events in light of the later "auxiliary" occurrences, as well as to discern parallels in theme and historical development when the synchronically-webbed narrative takes over in Books 7ff.¹⁶

¹⁴ See esp. A. C. Scafuro, "Universal History and the Genres of Greek Historiography" (Yale Ph.D. Dissertation, 1983), 155–204; on scope, setting, and purpose of Polybius' history writing, see, e.g., F. W. Walbank, *A Historical Commentary on Polybius* (3 vols.; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957, 1967, 1974); K. S. Sacks, *Polybius on the Writing of History* (Berkeley/Los Angeles: Univ. of California Press, 1981); S. J. D. Cohen, "Josephus, Jeremiah, and Polybius," *History and Theory* 21 (1982): 366–81.

¹⁵ "Continuity of the narrative" (τὸ συνεχές [τῆς διηγήσεως] cf. *Histories* 1.5.5; 1.13.8; 3.2.6; 4.1.8; 6.2.1; 38.5.3) is tantamount to Aristotle's notion of "plot" (μῦθος/πράξεις) for tragedy and epic as the dynamic organization or "structuring of events" (ἡ τῶν πραγμάτων σύστασις, e.g., *Poetics* 6[1450a].15, 32) to produce a coherent story with a "beginning," "middle," and "end" issuing in a "new state of affairs" (μετάβασις/μεταβολή); see D. P. Moessner, "Managing" the Audience. Diodorus Siculus and Luke the Evangelist on Designing Authorial Intent', *Luke and His Readers. Festschrift A. Denaux*, ed. R. Bieringer, G. Van Belle, J. Verheyden (BETL 182; Leuven: University and Peeters Presses, 2005), 61–80, esp. 69–75.

¹⁶ As Scafuro ("Universal History and the Genres," 178) observes, "[the reader] begins to think that the intrusive international events of the synchronism may subsequently have something to do with the narrative he is presently reading." Book 6 is an account of republican Rome's constitution which serves in the narrative as a bridge between the two poetics schemes (κατὰ μέρος vs. συμπλοκή) of Books 1–5 and Books 7–40 respectively.

4.28.1 Philip V wages war with certain members of the Aetolian and Achaean Leagues at the time that Hannibal attacks Saguntum

Polybius tells his audience why he asserts this syn-chronous relationship:

4.28.1–3 Now had there been any connection at the outset between Hannibals' enterprise and the affairs of Greece it is evident that I should have included the latter in the previous Book, and following the chronology, placed my narrative of them side by side in alternate sections (ἐναλλάξ . . . κατὰ παράθεσιν) with that of the affairs of Spain. But the fact being that the circumstances of Italy, Greece, and Asia were such that the beginnings of these wars were particular to each country (τούτων ἰδίως), while their ends were common to all (συντελείας κοινάς). . . .

Unparalleled by any known Hellenistic historian, Polybius places a synchronism in the middle of a Book (4). The effect would be arresting for the auditor; a “loudspeaker announcement” has just been sounded which must be “heard.” Consequently, Polybius’ prompting in the middle of Book 4 has the impact of pointing to one authorial motive: to bring proper focus upon the Second Punic War—as Polybius continues on, “so that the whole narrative may not only be easy to follow (εὐ—παρὰ κολούθητος) but may make a due impression on my auditors/those paying attention” (τοῖς προσέχουσιν, 4.28.6!). For Polybius’ audience is not only led back to the end of Book 3 where Hannibal is poised to conquer Rome itself, but is also prompted forward to Book 9 when the Carthaginian general will occupy many of the towns in central Italy and bring the great city to its knees.¹⁷

1.2. *Synchronisms of the Main Event with (an) Auxiliary Event(s) Not Treated Later*

1.6.1 ‘The Gauls Occupy Rome Nineteen Years after the Battle of Aegospotami, Sixteen Years before Leuctra, the Same Year as the Spartans Make the Peace Known as Antalcidas with the King of Persia, and the Year in which Dionysius the Elder Besieges Rhegium’

Polybius makes no secret of the reason for this synchronism which comes so early in the whole work. The Gauls’ occupation of Rome

¹⁷ See, e.g., B. L. Hallward, “The Roman Defensive” in *The Cambridge Ancient History* 8 (Cambridge: The University Press, 1930), 57–82.

in 387–86 B.C.E. marks the pre-beginning (πρώτη) of the crucial beginning point (ἀρχή) of Rome's ascendancy to world domination and thus of Polybius' whole enterprise (ἐπιβολή):¹⁸

By "beginning" at an even earlier event in Rome's history, at a point symbolic of the very antithesis of her rise to dominion—when Rome herself is under foreign domination—the historian can poignantly illustrate the paradoxical, even "miraculous" 'turn-around' (περιπέτεια) of affairs guided by Fortune. Polybius intends the reader to 'follow' (παρακολουθῶ) a 'synoptic' account of these earlier events to establish a pattern in their minds: there is a rhythm to the rise and fall of empires. But Rome can be seen to fit into this pattern only up to a point. When *historia*'s workings would seem to indicate otherwise, Rome manages to break this pattern.¹⁹

1.12.6–7, 1.13.6, 10–11 To follow out (παρακολουθῆσαι) this previous history—how and when the Romans after the disaster to Rome itself began their progress to better fortunes, and again how and when after conquering Italy they entered on the path of foreign enterprise—seems to me necessary for anyone who hopes to gain a proper general survey (συνόψεσθαι) of their present supremacy. . . . Now to recount all these events in detail is neither incumbent on me nor would it be useful to my readers (τοῖς ἀκούουσι) . . . I shall, however, attempt to narrate somewhat more carefully the first war between Rome and Carthage for the possession of Sicily; since it is not easy to name any war which lasted longer . . . with more battles, and greater 'changes of fortune' (περιπέτεια).²⁰

The synchronism of 1.6.1—with the Gauls' conquest of Rome in tandem with the rising and falling of other empires—throws down a gauntlet to the reader to make sense of Rome's rising 'from the dead.' By comparison (σύγκρισις) with the actions and traits of other nations, Rome's singular character can now become more vividly portrayed.²¹

¹⁸ *The Histories* 1.5.1–5; 5.31.8–32.5.

¹⁹ Even the inevitable phase of decline after the zenith, according to Polybius' 'cycle of political/cultural development' (πολιτειῶν ἀνακύκλωσις), seems to be significantly arrested or at least delayed for Rome; cf. Walbank, "Polybius and the past": "At Rome . . . the setting up of the mixed constitution had acted as a brake on the revolving wheel" (185), and yet paradoxically, "Rome does seem to have been the one and only state for which the *anacyclosis* worked" (187).

²⁰ Some modifications of Paton's (LCL) translation.

²¹ Scafuro ("Universal History and the Genres," 155–65) suggests that Polybius has formulated a response to Aristotle's arguments in *Poetics* 9 and 23. Aristotle

Synchronisms like 1.6.1, then, provide *aural-prompts* into the sequence of the ‘arrangement’ and thus sound the way “to follow” (παρακολουθήσαι) “the continuous character of the narrative” (τὸν τρόπον συνεχοῦς . . . τῆς διηγήσεως, 1.13.9). Moreover, in this ‘following,’ the “starting point” of the whole narrative (ἡ ἀρχή) provides the crucial hermeneutical key to the configuration of all the subsequent events:

For the ancients, saying that the beginning (ἡ ἀρχή) is half the whole, advised that in all matters the greatest care should be taken to make a good beginning (ὕπερ τοῦ καλῶς ἄρξασθαι). . . . One may indeed confidently affirm that the beginning (ἡ ἀρχή) is not merely half of the whole, but reaches as far as the end (πρὸς τὸ τέλος διατείνειν). . . . how is it possible to sum up events properly without referring to their beginning (μὴ συναναφέροντα τὴν ἀρχήν), and understanding whence, how, and why the final situation of the events was brought about (πόθεν ἢ πῶς ἢ διὰ τί πρὸς τὰς ἐνεστώσας ἀφίκεται πράξεις)? So we should think that beginnings (αἱ ἀρχαί) do not only reach half way, but reach to the end, and both writers (τοὺς λέγοντας) and readers (τοὺς ἀκούοντας) [“speakers and hearers!”] of a general history should pay the greatest attention to them. [5.32.1–5]

Auditors should therefore not be surprised that in Book 2 Polybius will begin weaving Roman engagement of the Carthaginians with the Romans’ defeats of the *Gauls*, a foreshadowing of their later war with the Carthaginians who will have to rely upon the Gauls as critical allies.

1.3. ‘Synchronisms’ as *Sounding Boards* to ‘Following’ (παρακολουθήσαι) ‘the Continuity’ of the Author’s Narrative ‘Plan’

We have just seen that in his extended prologue Polybius employs παρακολουθέω to link his auditors to the narrative ‘arrangement’ that unfolds his own grasp of Fortune’s manifold orchestrations. Like a fulcrum, παρακολουθέω also pitches his readers towards Polybius’ spe-

lampoons historians like the later Timaeus who try to impute “marvelous” workings of Fortune/Fate by linking similar happenings in different parts of the world but which have no putative relationship of cause and effect. “What is being likened [by Aristotle] is . . . the lack of unity in history and in ‘improper’ epic . . . due to the inclusion of events that are not causally related” (164). Aristotle cites Herodotus, not Thucydides, as his standard for exemplifying events which occurred at the same time but yet “do not converge to a common result” (οὐδὲν πρὸς τὸ αὐτὸ συντείνουσαι τέλος, *Poetics* 23.26).

cial credentials to narrate this 'master plan.' Several times throughout his forty volumes Polybius draws attention to his keen study of the rise of Rome both through his *first-hand witness of many of the events themselves* and through careful *study* or *inquiry* of government documents and earlier histories. For instance in 3.4–5, in the course of composing the history from the Second Punic War to the end of the Third Macedonian War (220–168 B.C.E.), Polybius learned through his own experiences of turbulent times following "the last conquest" of 168 ("*I not only witnessed most but took part in some of the events*" [τὸ τῶν πλείστων μὴ μόνον αὐτόπτης, ἀλλ' ὃν μὲν συνεργός]), that he must continue his narrative to describe the aftermath of Rome's rule, as well as to have his readers "follow" (παρακολουθέω) back to the earlier "beginning" of 264 B.C.E. to bring this new state of affairs into proper perspective. He goes on to argue:

3.32.1–2 For this reason I must pronounce those to be much mistaken who think that this my work is difficult to acquire and difficult to read (δυσανάγνωστον) owing to the number and length of the Books it contains. How much easier it is to acquire and peruse forty Books, all as it were connected by one thread, and thus to follow clearly (παρακολουθήσαι σαφῶς) events in Italy, Sicily . . . than to read or procure the works of those who treat of particular transactions (κατὰ μέρος). . . . For I maintain that far the most essential part of history is the consideration of the remote or immediate consequences of events and especially that of causes (μάλιστα τὰ περὶ τὰς αἰτίαι). . . . All this can be recognized and understood from a general history, but not at all from the historians of the wars themselves, such as the war with Perseus or that with Philip.

Polybius' active *engagement* both as *eyewitness* and as an *informed contemporary follower* of the rise of Rome produced his special qualifications to compose a narrative. Polybius can lead his readers to *follow* his narrative construal precisely because of his "mind's own ability to follow" the course of Rome's preeminence. As one "steeped" in the history of Rome's rise, Polybius assumes that his readers will also become so engaged. All the emphasis, therefore, in his use of παρακολουθέω in Books 1 and 3 is upon the effective "following of the mind" into new vistas of understanding which will occur through "following" the distinctive scope and sequence of his narrative road. Παρακολουθέω thus ties the *readers' ability to follow to the author's peculiar competence to lead*.

To sum up, Polybius' 'synchronisms' function as 'aural aids' sounding the way to 'follow' Polybius' 'arrangement' so that his auditors

might grasp Polybius' own grand sweep of the multifarious performances of Fortune that converge in "one result" (τέλος/συντέλεια).

2. *Synchronisms as Metaleptic Prompts in Luke's Gospel-Acts*

What does Luke want his auditors to hear with his deployment of synchronisms at the beginnings of his two volumes²² as well as, like Polybius, in the middle of his volumes? Luke's synchronisms point over and over again to the powers and 'powerful players' that coalesced to cause the "peoples" of Israel, along with the "kings of the earth" (Psalm 2:1–2²³ in Acts 4:25b–26) to "*align against*" Israel's "Messiah" and *reject* Israel's "glory as a light of illumination for the nations" (Luke 2:32).

If this characterization is correct, then Luke's synchronisms would thrust his readers into the dynamic of the 'continuity of the narrative' that points to Jesus' *death* as a crucial 'turning point' in the larger plot of the 'end' (τέλος) of the narrative of the "eschatological release of sins." It may be that Jesus' *rejection* plays a far greater role in the "witness" of proclamation into all the nations for the forgiveness of sins than a popular view of Luke's theology of the cross will allow (e.g., Luke 24:44–49; Acts 1:6–8).²⁴ Might it be that the

²² In Act 1:21–23 (cf. 10:37), Luke's narrator describes the "beginning" (ἀρχαίμενος) of Jesus' public calling as "from the baptism of John," while later in Acts 11:15 Luke will have Peter point back to the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost as a secondary "beginning." The "beginning" of Pentecost fulfills John's own prophecy of a "mightier one who will baptize with Holy Spirit and fire" (Acts 2:33) when John's own baptizing was heralding the anointing baptism of the Beloved Son by the Holy Spirit (cf. Acts 10:38) as the primary beginning for both volumes (Luke 3:15–17, 21–22). For secondary beginning points of the continuity of plot at the textual beginnings of each new volume of a multi-volume narrative, see, e.g., Polybius, *The Histories* 1.5.1, 6.1, 12.5–9; 4.28.4, etc.; Diodorus Siculus, *Library of History* 2.1.1–3; 3.1.1–3; 4.1.5–7; 5.2.1; 6.1.1–3; [7–10]; 11.1.1; 12.2.2–3; 13.1.1–3; 14.2.4; 15.1.6; 16.1.3–6 [cf. 15.95.4!]; 17.1.1–2; 18.1.5–6; 19.1.9–10; 20.2.3; [21–40]; [] indicate fragmentary books without extant linking passages.

²³ All citations of the OT are from the LXX, unless otherwise indicated.

²⁴ A majority view of critical scholarship is that Luke himself lacks or avoids an understanding of Jesus' death as atoning, or, at the least, mutes such significance to a marginal note. See, e.g., H. Conzelmann, *Theology of St. Luke*, p. 201; U. Wilckens, *Die Missionsreden der Apostelgeschichte* (WMANT 5; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1974) 216; E. Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles* (MeyerK; Oxford: B. Blackwell, 1971) 91–92; W. G. Kümmel, "Current Theological Accusations Against Luke," *ANQ* 16 (1975) 134, 138; I. H. Marshall, *Luke: Historian and Theologian* (Grand Rapids:

very phrase, "the Messiah must suffer,"²⁵ functions as metaleptic prompting to the larger causal connection of Jesus' crucifixion to the "change of fortune" in the offer of the "forgiveness of sins" to Israel and the nations in Luke's overarching "plan of God" (ἡ βουλὴ τοῦ θεοῦ).²⁶

i) *Luke 1:5*. "And it happened in the days of Herod, King of Judea, that there was a certain priest, from the order of Abijah, whose name was Zachariah, and his wife, from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth."

Why is Herod—and not the Roman governor or emperor or high priests or other Judean officials—named alone at the pre-beginning (πρώτη)²⁷ of the plot? Is it not because another Herod of the same power dynasty, Herod Antipas, will figure prominently in John the Baptist's career, whose fate in turn prefigures the lot of Jesus who will meet this Herod again at the 'end' during the process of his "trial" that results in his crucifixion (cf. esp. *Luke 3:19–20→3:21–22→9:9→23:8–11*)? Are we perhaps to hear that, above all, Israel's own "king" was instrumental in fulfilling the plot of Israel's own "suffering" Messiah? Is this king in some way symbolic of the whole nation who are eager "to see" Jesus but who refuse to "repent?" (cf. *Luke 9:9→13:31–35→23:8–11*).

ii) *Luke 2:1*. "And it happened in those days [i.e., those of John's birth, *Luke 1:57–80*] that an edict from Caesar Augustus was sent forth, declaring that the whole inhabited world [of Rome] should be registered. This landmark registration took place around the time when Quirinius was serving as governor of Syria."

Luke's auditors were well aware that Augustus was the most powerful ruler on earth, who, according to, for instance, the Priene inscription, was hailed in eastern provinces like Syria as "savior for us and for our descendants . . . the beginning of the message of peace

Zondervan, 1970) 172; E. Käsemann, *Essays on New Testament Themes* (SBT 41; London: SCM, 1964) 92; J. B. Green, *Theology of Luke* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1995) 124–25; H. D. Buckwalter, *The character and purpose of Luke's Christology* (SNTSMS 89; Cambridge Univ., 1996) 231–72; P. Doble, *The paradox of salvation: Luke's theology of the cross* (SNTSMS 87 Cambridge Univ., 1996) 235–37.

²⁵ *Luke 24:26, 46; Acts 3:18; 17:3; 26:23; cf. Luke 9:22; 17:25; 22:15; Acts 1:3; 9:16.*

²⁶ See n. 8 above.

²⁷ For the relation of the πρώτη to the ἀρχή in narrative plotting, see above on *The Histories* 1.6.1.

(εὐαγγέλια).”²⁸ Luke wants his readers to know of another “Savior” and “Lord,” “the Christ” of the royal line of David (2:4–14) whose humble origins become a “sign” of God’s saving act “for the whole people” (2:10–12) and herald “peace” for “all humanity of God’s gracious plan” (εὐδοκία) (2:14). Does not Jesus’ birth by conception of the Holy Spirit augur a Savior far greater than the adopted son of Julius Caesar and a “peace” more momentous than the *Pax Romana* (cf. 1:26–38)?

iii) *Luke 2:21*. “And when the eight days before he was to be circumcised were fulfilled, he was given the name ‘Jesus’ [sc., ὁ κύριος σῶζει], the name given by the angel [Gabriel] before he was conceived in the womb.”

Jesus’ “parents” follow the “law of Moses” as Torah-adherent Jews. Does Luke perhaps wish to underscore that the Savior already named in heaven before his birth was reared as an Israelite, “of the house and line of David,” and that his life was geared to follow the rhythms and customs of faithful Jews as an elect son²⁹ of Israel (cf. *Luke 23:35*)?³⁰

iv) *Luke 2:22–24*. “And when the days of their cleansing according to the law of Moses were fulfilled, they [‘the parents,’ cf. 2:27] brought him up into Jerusalem in order to present him to the Lord, just as it stands written in the law of the Lord, ‘Every male that opens the mother’s womb [firstborn] shall be declared “holy” for the Lord’ [Exod 13:2, 12, 15], and to offer a sacrifice according to what is spoken in the Law of the Lord, ‘a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons’” [Lev 12:8; 5:11].

Jesus’ parents fulfill “the law of Moses” for “the purification” of a new mother and “sanctification of the firstborn” à la Lev 12:2–4 and Exod 13:1–16 respectively. The entire encounter with the pious worthies Simeon and Hannah, however, mimics more the “presentation of Samuel” in Eli’s temple at Shiloh than straightforward

²⁸ See, e.g., H.-J. Klauck, *The Religious Context of Early Christianity. A Guide to Graeco-Roman Religions* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003) 298.

²⁹ E.g., [LXX] 2 Kgdms 7:8–17.

³⁰ See, e.g., J. B. Green’s illuminating presentation of Luke’s intertextuality with the LXX, “Internal repetition in Luke—Acts: contemporary narratology and Lucan historiography” in *History, Literature, and Society in the Book of Acts* (ed. B. Witherington III; Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1996) 283–99, esp. p. 290: “Luke inscribes himself in scriptural tradition, showing his debt to this previous story, and inviting his auditors to hear in this story the resounding continuation of that story.”

fulfillment of *halakah*.³¹ Does the sacrifice of redemption for the “firstborn” in Exod 13 which reenacts Israel’s redemption through the Passover, together with Zachariah’s prophecy of “making redemption” (ποιεῖν λύτρωσις)³² in the “Lord’s” “visitation of his people” in Luke 1:68b, perhaps adumbrate Jesus’ self-sacrifice when, after “cleansing” the Temple, he will signify his voluntary death “for them” as the sealing of a “new covenant” at the Passover with his “apostles” (Luke 22:19–20 in 22:14–38; cf. 2:7—Jesus as the “firstborn”!)? Luke would seem to be prompting his audience to hear the promises of “redemption” of Israel’s founding *release* and *covenant* with the Lord God as coming to a new and definitive stage of realization in the career of Jesus.

v) *Luke 2:27b–28*. “And when the parents brought the child Jesus in [i.e., into the Temple] in order that they might do according to what was customary under the law concerning him, then he himself [i.e., Simeon] received it [the infant] into his arms and blessed God, saying, . . .”

Luke presents this “presentation” with considerable aural fanfare:

(a) Simeon’s arrival at the Temple “by the Spirit” at the very moment that the “Lord’s Christ” is also present (2:26–27a) is a God-ordained occurrence. What could appear as a marvelous “accident” of an aged “righteous” person, who had been waiting year after year for Israel’s “consolation,” is actually part of a grander scheme of the Lord’s

³¹ See esp. 1 Kgdms. 1:24–2:10, 20; cf. Luke 2:22b—“to present (παραστήσαι) him to the Lord.”

³² My rendering of the unusual phrase “make redemption” which is not found in the LXX. But what is consistent from the LXX’s usage of the verb λυτρώω and its noun λύτρωσις is the requirement of either animal sacrifice or ransom money/goods (λύτρον) to *make* redemption a reality. In conjunction with God “visiting” his people to effect release from slavery and/or sin (Luke 1:68b), “make redemption” denotes the unspecified means through which God’s presence for release is accomplished (cf. LXX Ps. 110:9 [“send redemption”]). Cf. J. A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel according to Luke* (2 vols.; AB 28–28a; New York: Doubleday, 1981/1985) 1:383: “the combination of the noun *lytrōsis* with the verb *poiein* is strange . . . it describes Yahweh’s activity on behalf of his people in terms of ransom or release”; cf. L. T. Johnson, *The Gospel of Luke* (SP 3; Collegeville MN: Liturgical Press, 1991), 46: “In contrast to the ‘liberation’ of the people from Egypt under Moses, however (Acts 7:35), Luke here defines it in apolitical, cultic terms.”

For God’s “visitation” as gracious deliverance, see esp. LXX Exod 4:31; Ruth 1:6; Ps 79:14; Ps 105:4; for “to redeem/make ransom” and its noun, see e.g., LXX Exod 6:6; 13:13, 15; 15:13; Lev 19:20; 25:25; 27:31, 33; Num 18:15, 16; Ps 48:7, 8, 9; Ps 129:8 [from sin]; Isa 63:4, *inter alia*.

“saving action” (2:30a), disclosed to Simeon in advance by the very same “Holy Spirit” (2:26).

(b) Like Melchizedek blessing Abraham, the “greater” Spirit-led Simeon blesses Mariam (and Joseph) and reveals to her what role her child will play in God’s “pre-ordained plan” (κεῖται, 2:34) and even her own experience of this plan. Now she must learn that her child, called “Son of the Most High” who “will reign on David’s throne forever” (1:32–33), will do so only as a “sword of discernment” cuts conflict right through the “heart” of the “many” in Israel and does not spare even her “own soul” (2:34–35). As a ‘character’ in the ‘plot,’ clearly Simeon is endowed with omniscient-like understanding that can declare directly what God’s ‘plan’ specifically entails.³³

(c) Hence, whatever temptations there might be for Luke’s audience to regard Mariam’s and Zachariah’s prophecies as “triumphalistic” oracles of a political-nationalistic Messianic reign—to destroy literally Israel’s enemies (cf. Luke 4:1–13!)—are transmuted into nearly the opposite, namely, an “anointed” “king,” whose rule consists of being greatly opposed by his own people and thus of creating deep division among Israel itself. A number of terms and expectations from the “Servant of the Lord’s” calling in Isaiah 40–55 are clustered in Luke’s *poiēsis* here; Simeon himself looks to be one of the “righteous” of Isaiah, who are linked corporately as “the servant” (ὁ δοῦλος) with a righteous one depicted more in individual characteristics as “the servant” (ὁ παῖς). Moreover, even as God’s “saving action” in the child Jesus will engender “glory to your people Israel,” the “light” of this salvation will be dispersed “among the nations” (2:30–32).³⁴

(d) “Hannah,” who is reminiscent of her namesake’s role in a presentation at a temple, and mirroring the qualities of Simeon, including her ordained appearance “at that very hour” (2:38a), confirms

³³ For the relation within the plot of various characters’ understanding (διάνοια) of the larger plot in conjunction with the plotted understanding (διάνοια) of the composer-author, see Aristotle, *Poetics* 6, 19, 25, and cf. D. P. Moessner, “Ministers of Divine Providence’: Diodorus Siculus and Luke the Evangelist on the Rhetorical Significance of the Audience in Narrative ‘Arrangement,’” *Literary Encounters with the Reign of God* [Studies in Honor of R. C. Tannehill] (ed. S. H. Ringe, H. C. Paul Kim; New York: T & T Clark International, 2004), 304–23, esp. 308–11.

³⁴ Notice the cluster of images, phrases, and terms from Isaiah, esp. chaps. 40–55, in Luke 2:29–32: e.g., Isa. 40:5; 42:6; 46:13; 49:6, 9; 52:10.

Simeon's oracles by offsetting and re-defining the expectations for all those "awaiting the redemption (λύτρωσις) of Jerusalem" (2:38b).

In sum, Luke places particular emphasis upon Simeon's and Hannah's oracles by hoisting a mega-phonē of three 'synchronisms' of the special calling of Jesus that Jesus will fulfill as "God's saving act." "Savior," "Lord," and "the Christ" all take on transformed roles through the prophecies of these two elderly righteous of Israel: Jesus' circumcision actually involves a particular "naming" for his special "calling," his "presentation to/for the Lord" is in reality a dedication to his unprecedented task of causing the "falling" as well as the "rising" of the "many," and his reception in the Temple by the righteous of Israel is a preview not only of the "rising" of Israel, but also of those who will be enlightened "among the nations."

By fusing these early scenes of Jesus' childhood with the requirements of "the Law of Moses," Luke would have us *hear* that a special *type* of fulfillment, as well as a special *time* of fulfillment, is truly taking place. All emphasis upon the "saving act" is upon Jesus as a *sign of opposition*; the "redemption" of Jerusalem will actually take place through a great conflict of judgment within the very soul of Israel. Clearly this 'continuity of the narrative' is not what Greco-Roman auditors would be anticipating. As Luke completes his frontispiece (πρώτη) to the 'beginning' (ἀρχή) of his narrative, it would appear that the "good news" consists in the ironic, if not unbelievable message, that salvation for Israel will come to its decisive goal in the rejection of "Messiah the Lord" (cf. Isa. 53:1).

vi) *Luke 3:1*. "In the fifteenth year of the rule of Tiberias Caesar, when Pontius Pilate was serving as governor of Judea, and Herod [as] Tetrarch of Galilee, and Philip, his brother, Tetrarch of the regions of Ituraea and Trachonitus, and Lysanius, Tetrarch of Abilene, at the time when Annas and Caiaphas were high priest, the word of God came in the wilderness to John, son of Zachariah."

This sixth synchronism adumbrates the 'beginning' (ἀρχή) point of both volumes by linking John's calling to be the "voice in the wilderness" of Isaiah 40ff. (Luke 3:4–6) with the geo-political control of Palestine and portions of Syria and Trans-Jordan:

(a) We meet "Herod" again, now presented as "Tetrarch" over Galilee rather than "King of Judea." Now Pontius Pilate "is governing" Judea. Power has shifted as have also the characters. Even Augustus Caesar

has changed to Tiberias. Yet God's promises to Zachariah and Elizabeth fulfilling Israel's Scriptures continue unbroken and according to a set pace. The "word of God" happens "just as it stands written in the book of the oracles of the prophet Isaiah, 'A voice crying in the wilderness. . . .'"

(b) Is it simply fortuitous that "Pilate" is followed by "Herod" after the one who rules over them both is mentioned? Are we to hear already near 'the beginning' of the plot that these two figure prominently "during the whole time that the Lord (κύριος!) Jesus went in and out among them" (Acts 1:21)? Are we not also to think of them as decisive at the 'end,' who as former "enemies" link *hands* to become "friends" and put the 'Son of sinful humankind' to death (Luke 9:7–9→9:44→23:12→24:7→Acts 4:25–28). According to the thought of the "gathered servants (δούλοι)" in Acts 4, Pilate's and Herod's becoming friends—to join "the arrogant machinations of the nations" with "the vain schemes of the peoples of Israel against your holy servant (παῖς) Jesus whom you anointed"—follows exactly "whatever your [God's] *hand* and *plan* (βουλή) had ordained in advance to accomplish" (fulfilling Psalm 2 regarding the κύριος and His χριστός, Acts 4:25b–26). Pilate and Herod are synchronized in the "plan of God" even as they are set in place to stamp *'the beginning.'*

(c) "Release of sins" (ἄφεσις ἁμαρτιῶν) is the goal of John's "preparing the way of the Lord" of Isa. 40:3 (Luke 3:3). John's proclaiming of a "baptism of a change of mind/repentance" results in (εἰς) that "release," as radical 'turn abouts' will be effected through John's preaching; what was once crooked will become straight, valleys are to be filled and mountains leveled as "all flesh shall see this saving act of God" (Isa. 40:4–5 in Luke 3:4c–5). John's "baptism of a change of mind" will certainly be instrumental in the "saving act" of God (Luke 3:6) through his Christ.

But why is the "baptism for a release of sins" (Luke 3:3) tied to the calling of the prophet in Isaiah 40? Is it because the prophetherald of good news (ὁ εὐαγγελιζόμενος) of Isaiah 40 and 51 "prepares" the way for the Lord's own coming to the restored exiles, "Look, your God; look, the Lord . . . is coming" (Isa 40:9b–10 [ἰδοὺ ὁ θεὸς ὑμῶν. ἰδοὺ κύριος . . . ἔρχεται . . .]; cf. 52:7)? Is the Christ the "Lord" whose way John is preparing? (Isa 53:1–2; cf. Luke 1:43; 2:11 et al.). Is then this Lord the individual servant figure of Isaiah 40–55 whose ignominious rejection and violent death from his own people is itself

regarded as an atonement like a 'scapegoat' who "bore the sins of the many" (αὐτὸς ἁμαρτίας πολλῶν ἀνήνεγκε, Isa 53:12b)? Will the high priestly duty of the Day of Atonement of a Caiaphas be evacuated by the death of God's "Christ?" (Luke 23:45b-46—"And the veil of the sanctuary was split down the middle . . . when he breathed his last breath"). It would seem that the decisive 'turn about' (μεταβολή//μετάβασις) of Jesus' rejection at the 'end' by all the peoples of Israel and the nations is already being "figured" here as 'the beginning point' is being shaped by "the kings of the nations" who "lord it over them" (Luke 3:1→22:24-25!).

vii) *Luke 3:21-22*. "And it happened during the time all of the people were baptized that when Jesus was baptized and was praying, the heaven opened up and the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon him, and a voice from heaven sounded, 'You are my beloved Son, in you I take delight'" (cf. Gen 22:2; Isa 42:1).

This seventh synchronism which introduces 'the beginning' (ἡ ἀρχή) of the narrative presents "the baptism of John" as the telling 'beginning' for all of Jesus' calling. The two figures of John and Jesus are fused together in one plan through their synchronized fulfillment of Scripture. The "saving act" which John prepares will be accomplished through the beloved Son and chosen Servant of Israel's great redemption as figured by the 'sacrifice of Abraham' and the sacrifice of the 'sin offering' and 'scape goat' of the Lord's anointed Servant (see Gen 22:2; Isa 42:1; 53:6, 10, 12). It now also becomes clear why our narrator has seemingly "jumped ahead" of the plot by announcing already in Luke 3:20 that Herod "locked up John in prison," while Jesus' baptism, presumably by John, is not described until 3:21-22. John's own fate as a rejected prophet by the "Herod" of the "peoples of Israel" embodies the "sign of opposition" against Israel's "anointed Son and Servant." We are reminded of Polybius' comments on the significance of 'the beginning.' John thus "goes before the Lord to prepare his way" both in life and in death: "And Herod said, 'John I beheaded. Who then is this about whom I am hearing these things?' And he was seeking to see him [Jesus]" (Luke 9:9b→23:8—"because of all that he [Herod] was hearing about him [Jesus], he had been hoping to see some sign performed by him"). "But no sign shall be given to this generation, except 'the sign of Jonah' [i.e., sign of impending judgement, as Jonah was to Nineveh]" (Luke 11:29-32). John's death, not his ultimate vindication, is that quintessential 'sign.'

viii) *Luke 13:1–5*. “Now there were there at that very time certain ones who began to tell him [Jesus] about the Galileans whose blood Pilate mixed with their sacrifices. And answering he said to them, ‘Do you think that these Galileans are worse sinners than all the rest of the Galileans, because they experienced these things? No!, I tell you, but unless you all change your way of thinking/repent (μετανοέω), you will likewise perish. Or those eighteen upon whom the tower at the Siloam fell and killed—do you think that they were worse transgressors than all the rest of those who live in Jerusalem? Not at all! I say to you, that unless you all turn around in your way of thinking, you will all likewise perish!’”

Will Pilate mix Jesus’ blood with Jesus’ sacrifice? (cf. *Luke 11:50–51→22:20→Acts 5:28→20:28→22:20*).

viii) *Acts 11:27–28*. “In those days [i.e., when Barnabas and Saul were teachers in Antioch] prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. And one of them with the name of Agabus stood up and indicated by a sign through the Spirit that a great famine was about to come upon the whole of the inhabited world, which [in fact] happened during the reign of Claudius.”

The time of “signs” is not over. The prophetic powers of the Holy Spirit relate to the whole of the inhabited world and not just to a Jewish sect in an obscure part of the earth (cf. *Acts 26:26!*). The “Christian” movement (11:26) impacts the fate of the whole of humanity whose ruler is Claudius. Does the mention of the Caesar suggest that Saul/Paul himself will reach as far as Rome with his preaching of the good news? Is Rome the goal of the resurrected Jesus’ commission in *Acts 1:8* to extend the “witness to/of” Jesus “to the end of the earth”? (cf. *Isa 49:6*).

ix) *Acts 18:1–2*. “After these things, departing from Athens, he [Paul] came to Corinth. And finding there a certain Jew by the name of Aquila, a native of Pontus who had recently come from Italy with his wife, Priscilla—because Claudius had given the edict that all the Jews must leave Rome—he [Paul] paid them a visit.”

This notice of the negative treatment of Jews by Rome during the mid 5th decade of the first century raises the question about the status of Jews like Paul who are convinced that Jesus is Israel’s Messiah. Caesar is still in control of “the inhabited world” (οἰκουμένη, *Luke 2:1*), or so it appears, and would seem to dictate the fates of all peoples, notwithstanding whatever was accomplished by the Christ in Jerusalem (*Luke 19:45–24:49*). Will Paul be similarly treated by Caesar and his representatives?

x) *Acts 18:12–13*. “When Gallio was pro-consul of Achaëa, the Jews with one accord attacked Paul and led him to the tribunal, declaring, ‘This man persuades people to worship God contrary to the law.’”

Echoing Pilate’s disdain for such matters as the laws and customs of ‘foreigners,’ Gallio tells the Jews that, since “it [the complaint] involves questions of words and names and of your own law, see to it yourselves!” (*Acts 18:15*). Paul has incited fierce opposition from the Jews almost in every city that he has visited and yet was favorably received in Cyprus by the Roman pro-consul, Sergius Paulus, who “believed, as he was astonished by the teaching of the Lord (ἐπὶ τῇ διδασκίᾳ τοῦ κυρίου)” (*13:4–12*). When Paul enters Jerusalem for the last time and is nearly killed by the throngs of “the people” (ὁ λαός) gathered for Pentecost but is protected by the Roman tribune, “the Lord stood by him that night, saying, ‘Take courage, for just as you have been bearing witness to those things concerning me here in Jerusalem, so also you must bear witness in Rome’” (*23:11*).

“Rome” can both embrace the spreading good news of Jesus the Christ or act menacingly indifferent. What is more, since the Christian “way” can be confused by Roman officials as Jewish propaganda (e.g., *Acts 16:19–24*), Paul’s predicament is placed all the more in the ambiguous shades and shadows of Jewish antagonism and Roman brute force. Will he be welcomed by Roman authority when he “bears testimony in Rome?”

Our composer Luke would lead us to believe—as Paul faces the “governors” of Judea, Felix and Festus in Caesarea, and is taken “in chains” to Rome—that the dynamics of the plot will lead Paul into the hostile, threatening crowds of Jews as well as foreshadow indifferent, if not looming neglect by the Romans. Instead, Luke is silent about Roman reactions, except for Paul’s ability to speak openly about the “things concerning Jesus” within his “rented quarters,” and our author subverts every expectation of Jewish reaction (*Acts 28:21–22, 25*).³⁵ Instead of a typical violent second meeting with Paul (cf. *Acts 13:42–52*), the Jewish leaders in Rome simply “take their leave” while “being in disagreement” (*28:25*).

³⁵ On the “ending” (τελεύτη) of *Acts* as the “end” (τέλος) of *Acts*, see further, D. P. Moessner, “‘Completed End(s)ings’ of Historiographical Narrative: Diodorus Siculus and the ‘End(ing)’ of *Acts*,” *Die Apostelgeschichte und hellenistische Geschichtsschreibung. Festschrift für Dr. Plümacher* (ed. C. Breytenbach and J. Schröter; AGAJU 57; Leiden: Brill, 2004), 193–221.

Like Polybius' grand sweep of Fortune which overturns and shatters the normal patterns of history, so Luke places Paul as "witness" in the city that controls "the end of the earth" (cf. Isa 45:22), "proclaiming the reign [kingship] of God and teaching the things [from the Scriptures] concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with entirely unhindered openness" to both Jew and Gentile (28:31). In Caesarea, Paul had summarized the message he had conveyed all along his calling: "bearing testimony to both small and great alike, declaring nothing except those things which the prophets and Moses had said would take place, that there would be a suffering Messiah, and that being the first of the resurrection from the dead, he [suffering Messiah] would proclaim light to this people and to the nations" (26:23). By the conclusion of Luke's two volumes, there is no doubt that Paul's sending, like the Servant's, to "bear witness" "to nations and kings and the sons and daughters of Israel" within God's all-embracing "plan"³⁶ has been fulfilled (Acts 9:15→28:31; cf. Isa 52:15–53:2).

To *summarize* Luke's synchronisms, Luke would have us hear, from the very frontispiece of the beginning, that the whole inhabited world of Jews and Gentiles—the peoples of Israel and the rulers of the nations—will collaborate to put Jesus to death. Both the ordinances of Moses and edicts of Rome will converge in the overarching plan of God that epitomizes "all" that the Scriptures declare must take place concerning Israel's "Christ." Pre-figured and pre-saged by the cluster of synchronisms in the pre-beginning and beginning of the narrative, it is the Messiah's rejection by his own people in concert with the authority of "all the kingdoms of the world" (Luke 4:5) that will radically transform the world in ushering in the new beginnings of "the saving act of God." Paul's own calling is choreographed with Rome's power in such a fashion that the plan of God vouchsafes Paul's witness of and to the "suffering Christ" "to the end of the earth" at the center of the great supra-ethnic power that controls the nations "at the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8; Isa 45:22; 49:6).

³⁶ Isaiah 40–55 stresses God's comprehensive plan for the whole world for all time through Israel and "His servant" who become "the Lord God's" "witnesses" (Isa 43:10, 12; 44:8—*μάρτυρες*; cf. 55:4; cf. e.g., *βουλή*—Isa. 45:26; 46:10; 55:8).

Conclusion

Both Polybius and Luke 'arrange' their narratives so that their audiences may grasp a 'providential plan' that has been enacted among and through the nations of the world:

1. Rome's divinely orchestrated ascendancy to control of the nations brings opportunity and benefaction for untold populations in a fashion in which all previous analogies are found wanting. By comparing and contrasting the events which propelled Rome into power with the patterns of events of other world powers, Polybius' synchronisms steer his audience to comprehend Rome's unrivalled rise to world domination.—The suffering rejection and rising from the dead of Israel's Messiah effects a universal release of sin and unparalleled blessing that inaugurates the very 'end' of God's 'saving plan,' unlike any for which Israel or any other people had ever prepared or even reckoned. Luke's synchronisms guide his readers to see how both the great power of the nations as well as the leaders of Messiah's own people cluster in historically unique ways to produce the crucifixion of Jesus.

2. Polybius aligns the working of providence with Fortune and Fate and yet does not attribute any direct causation or intervention of these "divine" forces to the events themselves in their causal interactions. At most, any hint of a more immediate explanation of Rome's 'success' emerges by highlighting Rome's unusual balance of courage and equanimity of spirit vis-à-vis other peoples. Luke, on the other hand, writes in the biblical tradition of the Jewish writers of Scripture and their LXX in which God himself has "visited his people"—but now in an unparalleled, eschatologically definitive way. To be sure, signs and omens, 'mighty works' and wonders, prophets and kings,³⁷ and theophanies and angelophanies prepare the way for the conception of the very "Son of God" in a lowly female human being. Nevertheless, the words and deeds of "all that Jesus began to do and to teach" become the events that spark such devoted misunderstanding, on the one hand, or hostile reception, on the other, which ironically contrive together to enact the providentially-intended rejection of that "Son." It is also highly ironic, that only when Jesus' followers begin looking for him "among the dead" does the magnitude of God's enfleshed

³⁷ Cf., e.g., Luke 10:24.

life among human beings begin to be re-discovered and unraveled into the ongoing story of all that this Jesus continued to do and teach through his Spirit-empowered flesh and blood witnesses “to the end of the earth” (the Acts).

3. However different providence’s workings may be for these two Hellenistic historians, both use the metaleptic allure of synchronized events to draw their audiences into the strange conjunctions of human actors and divine players that characterize such unprecedented historical developments. Through the rhetorical-poetics ploy of synchronisms, both authors insert finely tuned listening posts to sound the way along their authorially-designed ‘continuity of the narrative’ and consequently lead their audiences to the greater ‘end’ of their grand narrative ‘schemes.’

THE PAULINE ITINERARY AND THE ARCHIVE OF THEOPHANES*

Loveday Alexander

“It must certainly be assumed that Luke had available as a source for Paul’s journeys an itinerary of the stations on the journey, for he mentions even unimportant stations.” So Martin Dibelius, one of the greatest of all Acts scholars, in a paper first published in 1947.¹ Typically, it was left to Arthur Darby Nock, in his review of Dibelius’ collected papers on Acts, to raise the question, do we actually have ancient evidence for such itineraries, and how might such texts throw light on Acts?² Nock lists a number of references to personal itineraries in diary-form, such as the *ephemeris* used by one of Cicero’s clients, a businessman, to verify the date of a journey.³ But no amount of speculation, however disciplined, can match the value of examining an actual ancient document, and I have chosen to focus my discussion in this paper on the archive of Theophanes, a minor official from the Egyptian Thebaid whose travel accounts have survived by chance among the papyri of the John Rylands Library in Manchester.⁴ Apart from anything else, it seemed too good a

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¹ Martin Dibelius, “The Acts of the Apostles as an Historical Source,” in *Studies in the Acts of the Apostles* (ed. Heinrich Greeven; London: SCM, 1956), 102–108 (104); (ET of *Aufsätze zur Apostelgeschichte* [Göttingen; Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1951]), now reprinted as Martin Dibelius, “The Book of Acts as an Historical Source,” in *The Book of Acts: Form, Style, Theology* (ed. K. C. Hanson; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004), 27–31 (29).

² Arthur Darby Nock, “The Book of Acts: Review of Dibelius, *Aufsätze zur Apostelgeschichte*,” originally published in *Gnomon* 25 (1953): 497–506; cited from Arthur Darby Nock, *Essays on Religion and the Ancient World* (ed. Zeph Stewart; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), II, 821–32.

³ Cicero, *Quinct.* 57, cited in Nock, “The Book of Acts,” 824, n. 14.

⁴ *P.Ryl.* 627–51, published in C. H. Roberts and E. G. Turner, eds., *Catalogue of the Greek and Latin Papyri in the John Rylands Library, Manchester* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1952), 4:105–56.

coincidence to ignore that the archive provides a geographical link between my home in Manchester and our host city of Strasbourg, which houses a key letter from the archive which provides a name and a date for the journey. In this preliminary study, I present a detailed analysis of these documents and consider some implications for the Pauline itinerary in Acts.

1. *The Pauline Itinerary*

The source-critical hypothesis of the Pauline itinerary rests fundamentally on the observation of certain narrative peculiarities in the presentation of Paul's journeys in the latter part of Acts. These narrative features are well described by Dibelius:⁵

It must certainly be assumed that Luke had available as a source for Paul's journeys an itinerary of the stations on the journey, for he mentions even unimportant stations. It appears that this itinerary also contained comments upon the apostles' reception, their hosts, their activities, and the results; these comments cannot always, however, be distinguished from Luke's original work. The frequently used 'we', which, under the influence of modern historical ideas, used at one time to be taken as the earliest element of the whole account of the journey, was, perhaps, only introduced by Luke himself into his version in order to make it clear that he himself took part in Paul's journeys . . .

In a later paper first published in the same volume, Dibelius adds:

⁵ Dibelius, "The Acts of the Apostles as an Historical Source," in *Studies*, 104. The itinerary appears again in Dibelius' essay on "The Text of Acts," in *Studies*, 86: "An itinerary, that is a list of stopping-places, lodgings and missionary successes, is obviously behind the account of Paul's journeys, even in Chapters 13 & 14. This itinerary, in 14.6, names together the stations Lystra and Derbe and adds 'and there they preached.' But Luke still wishes to report a story about Lystra, and does so in vv. 8-18. For it the reader must transport himself back to Lystra, since the report has already reached Derbe. What the report presupposes, D has expressly stated; here 14.7 says, 'But Paul and Barnabas stayed at Lystra' [+ omits 'in Lystra' from v. 8]. It is a subsequent addition. If it were the original text, this note would be found in v. 6, and the travel station Derbe would not be mentioned until v. 20, that is, after the conclusion of the Lystra episode. This adds the text-critical observation that the Western text at this point represents an amplification sparked by an anomaly within the narrative as it stands, which Dibelius suggests can be explained as a 'narrative seam' between the itinerary and the isolated episode which Luke is inserting into it."

Constant reference has been made to one fact in particular: that in several sections of this account the story is told in the first person plural . . . If we wish to restrict ourselves to the 'we-passages' for the source of the missionary journeys, we find only thirty-seven verses. If, on the other hand, the 'I' which lies behind the 'we' is intended to mean the author of other or even of all the accounts of journeys or of the whole book, the 'we' has lost its value as a means of determining the source. In contrast to many scholars, I therefore disregard the 'we' straight away and instead start with the following observations on the account of the journey in Acts 13.4–21.18: (a) It is inconceivable that Luke should have included insignificant and unimportant stations in his account of the journey if he had not a description of the route at his disposal.⁶

Dibelius draws attention here to two distinct narrative features. (1) The use of redundant place-names in the journey narrative, i.e. the listing of places where nothing happens. These can be readily identified in the *Appendix* to Chapter 7 in this volume, where they are underlined. 'Redundant' toponyms are those that name places without a 'scene' which arrests the forward motion at a particular location.⁷ This includes both places which are listed as an overnight stop but without further incident, and places listed purely *en passant*—the latter most commonly islands and coastal places.⁸ (2) The unexplained and intrusive appearance of the first person plural pronoun as narrator of certain sections of the journey (the 'we-narration'). This odd phenomenon, for which no satisfactory explanation has yet been found,⁹ is almost, but not quite, coincidental with the redundant

⁶ "The Acts of the Apostles in the Setting of the History of Early Christian Literature," in Dibelius, *Studies*, 192–206 (197); now reprinted in *idem*, *The Book of Acts*, 3–13 (7).

⁷ For the terminology, cf. Tomas Hägg, *Narrative Technique in Ancient Greek Romances: Studies of Chariton, Xenophon Ephesus, and Achilles Tatius* (Skrifter Utgivna av Svenska Institutet i Athen, ser. 8, VIII; Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1971), ch. 2, pp. 87–111, esp. pp. 87–89.

⁸ See further Alexander, "Narrative Maps: Reflections on the Toponymy of Acts," in M. Daniel Carroll R., D. J. A. Clines, P. R. Davies (eds.), *The Bible in Human Society: Essays in Honour of John Rogerson*, (JSOTSup, 200; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), pp. 17–57.

⁹ Important recent studies are: Jürgen Wehnert, *Die Wir-Passagen der Apostelgeschichte: ein lukanisches Stilmittel aus jüdischer Tradition* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1989); Stanley Porter, "Excursus: The 'We' Passages," in David Gill and Conrad Gempf (eds.), *The Book of Acts in its First Century Setting* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans; and Carlisle: Paternoster, 1994), II, pp. 545–74.

place-names, and with sea voyages (see *Appendix* to Chapter 7, where we-passages are identified with W and sea-travel with S). But the two features are not precisely co-extensive, and this lack of precise match is one of the reasons Dibelius abandoned the attempt to reconstruct the hypothetical source from the we-passages and concentrated his attention on the redundant place-names.

My primary interest in all this is the literary-historical question which underlies the hypothesis itself rather than the various source-critical theories which have been put forward about which sections of Acts may or may not go back to such an itinerary. The fundamental question is a literary one, because it is based on the observation of certain literary phenomena in the narrative of Acts: and these remain significant narrative features quite apart from the source-critical question. The foregrounding of travel in Luke's narrative is one of the most striking aspects of Acts as a whole, and it is at its most striking in these itinerary passages. But the question also has a historical dimension, insofar as it seeks to explain (or at least to illuminate) these narrative phenomena by reference to significant parallels in contemporary literature. The core and focus of the debate is thus about observing what is going on in Luke's narrative, and how other contemporary narratives may or may not shed light on it. What we do with these observations is a different question. We may want to re-open the source-critical question; we may want to focus more on narrative analysis and ask questions about the author's overall purposes or the effects of the travel details on the reader. Personally, I do not see these as mutually exclusive options: whatever conclusion is reached about the source-critical question, the narrative features still demand some kind of explanation. But neither can proceed without a firm foundation in careful literary and historical analysis of the text of Acts and of the parallels in contemporary literature.

The crucial question, then, for my purposes, is to identify what ancient literary parallels there are, if any, to the procedure put forward by the hypothesis, namely of an itinerary or travel diary compiled during Paul's travels which could have been used as the basis for a narrative by a later writer (how much later need not strictly concern us here). I use the word 'literature' here in its widest sense, since we must *ex hypothesi* include documentary evidence (letters, private notes, official documents) which fall into the category of 'non-literary papyri' as well as texts which might be defined as 'literary' in the narrower sense of the word. In fact it is precisely the issue

of definition and the crossing of boundaries (ours or theirs) between 'literary' and 'non-literary' travel texts which draws our attention most fruitfully to the multitudinous ways in which travel becomes text. The inquiry raises questions not only about the existence of texts such as itineraries or travel diaries but also about the practice of ancient travelers in recording and keeping information about their travels: and this is one way in which the survival of a whole archive, such as we have with Theophanes' papers, is potentially significant.

2. *The Archive of Theophanes*

Text. The archive of Theophanes (*P.Ryl.* 616–51) is a small collection of estate and domestic accounts, private letters, and public documents re-used as scrap paper.¹⁰ The 'Travel Account' proper includes nos. 627–638 (possibly also 639); Plate 1 gives a photograph of no. 627 [?]. The archive includes a fragmentary Latin letter of introduction (623) from Vitalis (presumably Theophanes' official superior) to a certain Delfinius: its phrasing and script are identical with that of a papyrus letter preserved in Strasbourg, *P.Lat. Strassb.I*.¹¹ Theophanes' journey is also discussed by Lionel Casson, in *Travel in the Ancient World*, pp. 177, 190–93.¹²

Date. Theophanes' journey falls between 317 and 323 C.E. A *terminus a quo* of 317 C.E. is provided by the date of no. 617, a petition to the emperors which was re-used as scrap paper for a draft of the travel accounts. The Vitalis of the letter of introduction (623 and *P.Lat. Strassb.I*) is almost certainly to be identified with the *Ouitaios* of *P. Vindob. Boswinkel* 14.¹³ The archive appears to belong to the period just before the outbreak of civil war between Constantine and Licinius in 323 C.E. Theophanes was the advocate and legal adviser

¹⁰ *Catalogue of the Greek and Latin Papyri in the John Rylands Library Manchester*, IV, pp. 104–157.

¹¹ Edition and plate in H. Bresslau, *Archiv* III, pp. 168–72 [biblio details]; W. Schubart, *Ein Jahrtausend am Nil* (Berlin: Weidmann, 1912), p. 97; Latin text in Roberts and Turner, *Catalogue*, p. 105.

¹² Lionel H. Casson, *Travel in the Ancient World* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1974).

¹³ C. H. Roberts, "A Footnote to the Civil War of A.D. 324," in *JEA* 31 (1945), p. 113.

of some high official in government service, apparently on the staff of the Prefect of Egypt. The fact that Vitalis gave him introductions to provincial governors in Syria is an indicator of his high standing and suggests that his journey to Syria had some official purpose, perhaps connected with the financial preparations for the civil war.

The journey. Theophanes travels from Egypt (probably Antinoopolis) down the Nile to Babylon by boat, thence (presumably using the facilities of the *cursus publicus*)¹⁴ to Pelusium, then across the desert and up the coast of Palestine to Antioch. His pre-planned route (628, 638) follows the stages of the imperial itineraries and large sections of the journey can be paralleled in the Antonine Itinerary, the *Peutinger Tafel*, and the Jeromina map.¹⁵ He spent 18 days on the outward journey from Pelusium to Antioch, two months in Antioch, and another 18 days on the return, covering an average of 32 miles per day but with some much longer stages (64 miles on the last day). The travel account provides detailed lists of daily expenditure, principally on food and wine (both bread and wine being bought in two qualities, one for the master and his guests and one for the slaves, *τοὶ παῖδιοι*),¹⁶ but including also toiletries ('oil for the bath'), stationery ('two sheets of papyrus') and such luxury items as snow (in Byblus: to cool the wine) and 'a wine jar in the shape of Silenus'. The daily expenditure at Ascalon includes 'entry to the theatre and Odeion' (627.219–20); and the accounts for Caesarea include (if we accept Roberts' and Turner's attractive reading) a birthday present for someone's (presumably Theophanes') daughter (627.284–5).

The travel documents. Theophanes' travel accounts are not narrative texts but documents. Apart from the letters of introduction and a couple of private letters, the dominant format is one of lists: lists of place-names, packing lists of items needed on the journey, and lists of expenses en route.

¹⁴ Casson, *Travel in the Ancient World*, pp. 182–90.

¹⁵ Roberts and Turner, *Catalogue*, p. 106. For the Itineraries, see O. Cuntz, *Itineraria Romana* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1929); O. A. W. Dilke, *Greek and Roman Maps* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1985), ch. 8.

¹⁶ Casson, *Travel in the Ancient World*, p. 191: "Theophanes was particular about his wine: at Laodicea the pint he had for his lunch cost him almost as much as all the *vin ordinaire* he bought for his squad of servants."

2.1. *The Letters of Introduction* (623, P.Lat. Strasb.I)

The fact that two of these letters remained in the archive after Theophanes' return home suggests that they were never used: presumably Theophanes took along a stock of such letters for use as required. The two letters are addressed by Vitalis (in Latin) to fellow-officials in Syria, Delfinius and Achillius: the former is otherwise unknown, but Achillius' letter is addressed on the verso: 'Domino suo Achillio ἡγεμόνι Φοινείκη'. Each letter commends Theophanes to the 'inimitable conscientiousness (*religio*)' of the addressee, and asks him to 'deign to look on him as he passes through in a benign and humane manner characteristic of your nobility (*more honestatis tuae*)'. In the fuller text of the Strasbourg letter, Theophanes is described as a man from Hermopolis in the province of Thebes 'who decided on the suggestion of my lord our brother Philip to undertake the vexation of a journey as far as the office of my lord Dyscolus'. The careful use of titles here puts Theophanes' relatively high official status into perspective: he is important enough to be given letters of recommendation, but not on the level of those Vitalis calls 'brother' or 'lord' (if he were, presumably, he would not need a letter at all). His journey is undertaken *sine ratione*, which may mean 'without [official] expenses':¹⁷ as Casson observes, Theophanes seems to be able to use the staging-posts of the *cursus publicus* for lodging and transport costs but has to pay for his own food and incidental costs.¹⁸

2.2. *The Itineraries*

The itineraries give lists of place-names corresponding to the daily stages of the journey. These appear in two forms: the pure itinerary (628, 638) and the itinerary used as a framework for the daily accounts (627, *630).¹⁹

¹⁷ But *suae ratione*, "at his own expense," would be a possible alternative reading.

¹⁸ Casson, *Travel in the Ancient World*, p. 190.

¹⁹ *630 is a composite text of the accounts for the return journey reconstructed from a number of different fragments. The account appears both in draft form (nos. 635–638) and in a fair copy (nos. 630–634), and both have been used to reconstruct the full text.

(a) The *pure itinerary* simply lists the stages for the outward (628) and return (638) journeys, with the distances between them in miles. These two lists appear on the recto and verso of the same papyrus sheet, which seems to imply (as one might expect) that the information for both journeys was compiled before the party left home—which in turn implies a preliminary stage of consultation (easy enough, presumably, for an official party) of a map or itinerary listing the daily stages for the journey. The stages listed for the return journey differ slightly from those named on the outward trip: some intermediate stages are passed over, others are added, and the list stops short at the Egyptian frontier. But it is clear that the itinerary proper forms part of the planning stage of the journey. It cannot have been compiled from the stages listed in the daily accounts, which are sometimes missing, sometimes out of order, and include names which do not appear in the itineraries (e.g. 627.324/*630.312).

(b) The itinerary also appears in expanded form as a framework to the daily records of expenditure. This appears in two formats. In 627, a long papyrus which starts out as a packing-list, the itinerary of stages from Niciu (Lower Egypt) to Biblos has been copied in list form into column ii of the verso (see photo), with the stages from Biblos to Antioch in col. viii. Individual items of expenditure are then listed alongside in neighboring columns, perhaps originally with the intention of spacing the accounts to correspond to the itinerary: but it would be virtually impossible to reconstruct the order of the journey from these scattered notes without the itinerary itself. These accounts are much more confused and untidy than those for Antioch (629) or the return journey (*630), which suggests that the clerk responsible may have taken a while to get into the swing of this kind of ambulant accounting: or perhaps (given the amount of provisions bought in advance in Egypt) there were simply fewer incidentals to record on the outward trip. For the return journey, the account assumes the simpler form of a journal, with dates and place-names used as headings for daily expenditure: cf. e.g. 633 col. i line 1 ἐν Σιδονίῳ. The account includes place-names within Egypt omitted in 638 (Ostracinum—Babylon).

2.3. *Packing-List*

Packing-list of items taken for the journey, both clothes (and equipment) and food (627r); some of the latter is bought in Babylon and

appears on the verso of the same sheet. This was clearly compiled before the journey: some items are marked with a z, presumably standing for ζήτησον, 'search'. But the list was taken along on the journey and doubles as a reminder of the itinerary and as a list of expenditure for the outward trip (see above). Casson describes the contents of these lists as 'a miniature household':²⁰

The inventory of his clothing lists three types of tunic (light, ordinary, sleeved), light and heavy capes, various mantles and hoods, a rain-wrap, light felt shoes as well as heavy sandals, numerous changes of underwear, and several pairs of riding breeches. Then there was the kitchen equipment: cooking utensils, tableware, napkins; also oil lamps, both standing and hanging. For washing and bathing he carried olive oil, alum, and natron (a natural compound of sodium carbonate and sodium bicarbonate abundant in Egypt), and myrrh as an after-washing lotion, and a supply of wash-cloths, hand towels, face towels, and bath towels. For sleeping he had mattresses, sheets, blankets, pillows, rugs, and a selection of cushions.

2.4. *Accounts*

By far the largest part of the archive, listing expenditure on items bought en route (627v, *630) and during the two-month stay in Antioch (629). From Antioch onwards, these are itemized per day and (on the return journey) by place, with the totals reckoned up every five days and per month. The composite text *630 represents a number of fragments giving the accounts for the return journey, with a draft version (635–37) written on the verso of older documents unconnected with the journey (e.g. 637 is on the verso of 616, which must therefore have been taken along by the thrifty clerk as scrap paper), and a fair copy on new papyrus sheets (630–634). This may have been written up after the party reached home, although there were occasional purchases of papyrus sheets en route.

The accounts therefore do not in any sense provide a narrative of the journey (there are no verbs, for one thing, apart from the occasional participle), but they do effectively become a diary of daily expenses, listed per stage and per day: not a narrative, but the raw materials for a narrative.²¹ Notes of time appear occasionally to liven

²⁰ Casson, *Travel in the Ancient World*, p. 177.

²¹ It is not difficult to see how such an account could be used to check the date of a journey: cf. n. 3 above.

up the bare record of dates (e.g. 627.308 [verso col. vi] ‘the same day, late [ὄψεξ]’). Moreover Theophanes’ traveling retinue itself acquires a surprising degree of personality and character-differentiation through the use of personal names, personal pronouns, and occasional references to sub-groups within and connected with the party.

(i) *sub-groups*: e.g. “to the sailors coming down to Hermopolis with Achilles” (τοὶ ναῦται: 627.118–9); ‘to the Pannonian soldier, for wine’ (627.111–12, 116); ‘for the visit of the officials of the *strategus*’ (627.116, 129). The commonest is the recurrent tag τοὶ παῖδιοι, indicating the cheaper (and presumably rougher) bread and wine bought ‘for the servants’—a group in which by implication the writer does not include himself.

(ii) *personal names*: ‘to Eudaimon in (to?) Laodicea, for breakfast’ (627.289); ‘for breakfast, to Horus son of Bellus’ (627.209 = 627v col. i line 1); ‘to Hermes when he stayed behind in Laodicea’ (627.292); ‘to Horus and Theon [for] the speed-writer, for a contribution’ (*630.207–8); ‘to Theon [for] the official’ (*630.249). Other names clearly belong to people encountered en route: e.g. ‘In the tavern, with Eulogion’s party’ (*630.375); ‘to you, for a drink with Hermodorus’ (*630.511).

(iii) *personal pronouns*: (perhaps the most surprising item)

Probably the largest class are the items tagged simply with the *second person singular* pronoun *σοι*—presumably a reminder to Theophanes when he came to look over the accounts that money had been issued direct to him as ‘petty cash’ or ‘cash-in-hand’ (σοι εἰ χεῖρα): e.g. 627.254 (for olive-oil, for the bath); 627.275 (for bread); *630.449 and frequently, ‘for wine for dinner’; *630.245, ‘for breakfast’. Sometimes money is paid to somebody else ἐκ κελεύσεω σου (629.156–7: ‘to Horus, on your orders, the price of a sheet of papyrus’, cf. 639.184) or ὦ ἀπο σου (cf. *630.31–2, ‘to Hermes, as if from you, for the contribution’).

The *second person plural* appears much less frequently: e.g. *630.260.

The *first person plural* also appears, most commonly in the dative ἡμῖν: cf. 627.117 (for our wine); *630.240 (for our dinner); *630.313 (‘the price of wine for a drink for us’); *630.450 (‘to us for a drink for the slaves and for Dion and Alexander’).

First person singular appears at 627.135 (‘for making up the cost to Theodoulos, as if from me’) and at *630.369 (‘for me privately’); cf. 627v col. vii, where a whole section is marked ἰδίου λόγου—either

the clerk's private account, or perhaps, as Turner and Roberts suggest, 'private' items of expenditure which Theophanes will not declare on his official expenses.

There is no literary affectation about this variation, nor any particular connection with the literature of travel: the same pattern appears in 641, household accounts from the same archive giving details of the normal working patterns of the estate (e.g. 641.22–25 lists: 'for the acrobats . . . for the attendants of the *strategus* . . . for us (ἡμῖν) when we were attending on the *strategus* . . . for Dioscurus and Hermes . . .'). This is presumably the way the estate clerk would normally identify expenditure by different members of the entourage, giving just sufficient differentiation for the master who would eventually check the accounts. But these names and pronouns (and very occasional participles) do suggest how such a non-literary travel document could quite easily provide a framework (in retrospect) for a full *narrative* of a journey, with scattered but detailed notes on the stages of the journey, individuals who stayed behind or joined the party, length of stay in a particular place, people encountered *en route*, and even the odd intrusive 'we'.²²

3. *Preliminary Conclusions: The Acts Itinerary*

The archive of Theophanes cannot in itself throw any light on Acts since it dates from the fourth century C.E. But there is no reason to assume that it was unique. It is only the exigencies of preservation that have limited discoveries of papyrus documents to Egypt, and in fact since Nock and Dibelius wrote, the discovery of a hoard of wooden writing-tablets at Vindolanda, on Hadrian's Wall, dating from the beginning of the second century C.E., has significantly extended our knowledge of military and clerical practice across the Empire.²³

²² To what extent such an account could provide a basis for imaginative reconstruction of such a journey by a non-participant is another question: I am inclined to think that it would be very difficult without detailed knowledge of the topography and the people involved.

²³ Published in *Tab. Vindol. I*: A. K. Bowman and J. D. Thomas, *Vindolanda: The Latin Writing-Tablets* (London: Britannia Monograph, 4; Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies, 1983); *Tab. Vindol. II*: A. K. Bowman and J. D. Thomas, *The Vindolanda Writing-Tablets (Tabulae Vindolandenses II)* (London: British Museum, 1994);

The hoard includes a range of domestic accounts from the praetorium, much less meticulous than the ones produced by Theophanes' clerks, but in a very similar format, including scattered dates and personal pronouns ('to myself'; 'to you'; 'to the lord [*domino*], for a charitable donation').²⁴ One such document, looks like 'an account of expenditure incurred on a journey'. It includes place-names 'in the order in which they would be reached by a traveler coming from York to Vindolanda via Corbridge', and 'seems to record expenditure for a variety of items including food, perhaps clothing, equipment for a carriage, and perhaps also accommodation'.²⁵ The very existence of such documents—chance finds, after all, of essentially ephemeral material—sheds valuable light on the documentation of travel in the ancient world, and that does have some implications for the study of the travel narratives in Acts.

First, the mere existence of these archives suggests a possible mechanism for the survival of some kind of Pauline *ephemeris* or travel journal, at least in principle, alongside a broader Pauline archive containing (as I suspect) drafts and file copies of the letters written out for him by his secretaries. Note the existence in Theophanes' archive of both drafts and fair copies—all part of good secretarial practice, and attested in other ancient archives like the Zenon archive.²⁶ One of the things we do know about Paul is that he traveled with a sizeable retinue which included secretaries—which of itself implies a certain level of managerial ability. Of course this does not answer the specific difficulty raised by Nock: how could such a document survive the shipwreck?²⁷ But the general question seems worth investigating in terms of ancient archival practice.

Second, the fact that Theophanes' itinerary itself was almost certainly compiled *before* the journey suggests the availability of docu-

A. K. Bowman and J. D. Thomas, *The Vindolanda Writing-Tablets (Tabulae Vindolandenses III)* (London: British Museum, 2003). The tablets can be viewed on-line at <http://vindolanda.csad.ox.ac.uk/>.

²⁴ A. K. Bowman, *Life and Letters on the Roman Frontier* (London: British Museum Press, 1994), pp. 108–14; cf. esp. §6 (*Tab. Vindol. II.180*) and §10 (*Tab. Vindol. II.190*); *idem*, "The Roman Imperial Army: Letters and Literacy on the Northern Frontier," in A. K. Bowman, and Greg Woolf (eds.), *Literacy and Power in the Ancient World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 109–25.

²⁵ *Tab. Vindol. II.*

²⁶ E.g. the Zenon archive. Cf. E. G. Turner, *Greek Papyri* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), p. 48 and *passim*.

²⁷ Nock, "The Book of Acts," p. 823, n. 12.

ments and/or maps from which essential travel information could be noted down in the planning stages. Theophanes was a (relatively) high-status traveler with some kind of official standing, and apparently entitled to draw on the resources of the *cursus publicus*—exactly the kind of traveler for whom the Roman itineraries of the later empire were designed. But the imperial ‘post’ system was established by Augustus, building on a practice which can be traced back to the Persian period.²⁸ Rudimentary itineraries (in the form of lists of stages on major routes) are known from the first century onwards.²⁹ Was Paul’s party able to draw on this kind of advance information? We should not assume that the great imperial roads formed the only travel networks across the eastern Mediterranean, though they may be the best documented. Given the wide extent of travel among certain groups (e.g. traders and artisans), it is not unreasonable to suggest that similar lists of travel stages could have been passed on from one to another, perhaps linked with private knowledge of the lodgings and commercial contacts available to a particular ethnic group or trade guild (and we should not underestimate the potential of Paul’s family and business connections here). The fact that Jerusalem was a long-established centre of pilgrimage (as Acts itself bears witness) should also be borne in mind: some of the earliest surviving itineraries are Christian pilgrimage routes to the Holy Land, and it is *prima facie* likely that this practice would go back to the Jewish diaspora.³⁰ Conversely, the immense value of such information also suggests a perfectly plausible motive for compiling and preserving notes of ‘safe houses’ for the Christian mission, as Dibelius proposed long ago.³¹

The random use of personal pronouns in Theophanes’ travel accounts may also be of some relevance to the complex question of

²⁸ Casson, *Travel in the Ancient World*, pp. 53, 182–90.

²⁹ Dilke, *Greek and Roman Maps*, pp. 122–28; Nock, “The Book of Acts,” pp. 824–25. Cf. also n. 15 above.

³⁰ John Wilkinson, *Egeria’s Travels* (London: SPCK, 1971). Itineraries linking diaspora communities may also have been used by the rabbinic *sheliḥim* who had to travel to keep in touch with outlying communities as well as by the regular temple-tax donations which had to be taken to Jerusalem.

³¹ Dibelius, “Acts in the Setting of Early Christian Literature,” in *idem, Studies*, p. 199: “An itinerary of this sort, in the form of a list of stations, might well have been used on such journeys for the practical reason that, if the journey was made on another occasion, the route and the same hosts might be found again. I fail to see why Haenchen (1961, p. 84 n. 5) is so dismissive of this idea”.

the 'we-narration' in Acts, which has defied attempts to isolate a consistent first-person narrative source. In the archive of Theophanes, the 'we' is simply part of a broader process of characterization and differentiation within the traveling group³² which allows the anonymous writer to distinguish the members of the entourage ('we') from their leader ('you') as well as from each other (the servants, the sailors, Horus and Theon . . .). It all adds up, as Casson observes,³³ to a 'worm's eye view' of Theophanes' journey, written by a clerk with no interest whatever in the purpose of the journey but with an eye firmly fixed on the practical details of travel—food, lodging-places, means of transport, clothes. Interestingly, there are traces of this 'worm's eye view' in Acts, in the contrast between Paul's own lofty overview of his travels (e.g. Romans 15) and the practical detail supplied by the author of Acts: as I have argued elsewhere, this narrator (or his source) is one who, unlike Paul, is passionately interested in the *realia* of travel, especially travel by sea. Paul's view of travel is that of 'a presidential candidate on the campaign trail', able to travel 'from venue to venue without having to think about the means of travel at all, relying on his team to study the timetables and make the reservations': the narrator of Acts, with his concern for the details of shipping connections and harbors, has rather more of the perspective of the great man's PA.³⁴

As we have seen, the way the accounts of Theophanes are compiled, as a journal of daily expenditure linked with staging-posts en route, gives them a kind of proto-narrative quality despite their completely unliterary purpose and nature; and the occasional use of first- and second-person pronouns (and even of participles) adds to this quality. But there is still a huge gap between this kind of travel document and the narrative of Acts, and this should not be underestimated. Oddly enough, what we do not find in this kind of document is, first, the intermediate place-names (or 'redundant' place-names), of places seen in passing but not visited even as an overnight stop, which distinguish certain (not all) sections of the Acts narrative; and,

³² For an analysis of this differentiation and its importance in Acts, cf. Porter, "Excursus: The 'We' Passages," pp. 563–67.

³³ Casson, *Travel in the Ancient World*, p. 190.

³⁴ Alexander, "'In Journeyings Often': Voyaging in the Acts of the Apostles and in Greek Romance," in C. M. Tuckett (ed.), *Luke's Literary Achievement: Collected Essays* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), pp. 17–49.

second, the varied and technical verbs of travel which are such a striking feature of these same sections. It is in fact noticeable that both these features cluster in the sections of Acts describing sea-voyages, especially in 20:13–16, 21:1–3, and ch. 27 and these features may well be best paralleled not in the Roman itineraries but in the older Greek tradition of *Periploi* or coastal itineraries.³⁵ As I have noted elsewhere, the selection of geographical names gives Paul's last voyage a distinctively 'coastal' perspective. A high proportion of the redundant place-names in the Acts narrative are coastal, as are over half of the toponyms unique to Acts (20 out of 39). But of the 17 names shared by Acts with one or other of the novels and not with Paul, 12 are coastal, three being the Aegean islands and promontories named in this passage. This is one of the features which make the mental map of Acts look so different from that of Paul, despite the fact that almost all Paul's toponyms are included in Acts. It is an unusual perspective for a biblical writer, and one which links Acts, surprisingly, with a rather different geographical tradition.³⁶ Nevertheless, the archive of Theophanes is a valuable reminder of the huge variety of documentary modes, literary and otherwise, in which travel can become text in the ancient world.

³⁵ On the Periplus literature, see REFS.

³⁶ Alexander, "Voyaging," pp. 21–30.

JUDAS, THE SON OF PERDITION, AND THE FULFILLMENT OF SCRIPTURE IN JOHN 17:12

Urban C. von Wahlde

The use of the Jewish Scriptures in the Gospel of John has been the object of considerable study¹ over the past forty years.² While this study has focused primarily on the explicit quotations, at times attention has also been directed to what are properly called ‘references’ to Scripture within the gospel.³ Typically there are four questions put to these texts: (1) what document of the Bible is being cited; (2) which version of the text is being used, the Hebrew or the LXX; (3) what accounts for any divergences from the exact form of the biblical text; (4) is there a significance in the particular formula used to introduce the quotation?

While some citations are taken verbatim from the LXX, at times there appears to be no precise parallel either in the LXX or in the Hebrew. When the correspondence with either version is not exact, opinions on the source of the quotation have, not surprisingly, varied, as have the explanations for the variation. Overall, it can be

¹ This brief study is offered to David E. Aune in deep appreciation for his collegiality on the faculty of Loyola University Chicago and for his many contributions to New Testament scholarship.

² The two major studies are those of E. D. Freed, *Old Testament Quotations in the Gospel of John* (NovTSup 11; Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1965) and M. J. J. Menken, *Old Testament Quotations in the Fourth Gospel: Studies in Textual Form* (Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1996). But see also G. Reim, *Studien zum alttestamentlichen Hintergrund des Johannesevangeliums* (SNTSMS 22; Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1974) and B. Schuchard, *Scripture Within Scripture* (SBLDS 133; Atlanta: Scholars, 1992). Other significant bibliography can be found in Menken’s book and will not be reproduced here.

³ There are sixteen texts where there is a quotation of Scripture and an indication that it is to be related to an incident or words connected with Jesus (1:23; 2:17; 6:31, 45; 7:38; 10:34; 12:13, 15, 38, 40; 13:18; 15:25; 19:24, 36, 37). In addition there are five texts which make “reference” to the fulfillment of Scripture without the appearance of a specific citation being given (7:42; 8:17; 12:34; 17:12; 19:28). Menken would include in his list of citations instances which in his view are the author’s “own free phrasing.” Thus Menken would consider only 17:12 and 19:28 to be “references.” However Menken does not study those texts where there is “free phrasing” since it would not be possible, he feels, to determine which specific form of the text is being “cited.”

said, I think, that there is considerable agreement that John made primary use of the LXX for his quotations (although they are hardly all verbatim) but there is also general recognition that at times the author clearly made use of the Hebrew.⁴

One of the primary differences between the various studies has been in the explanations why the Johannine text varies from the Hebrew and the LXX. The most common explanation has been that John was quoting freely from memory. It has also been suggested that in some cases the author may have had access to a text not available to us. Others have suggested that at least some of the changes were deliberate modifications for theological purposes. Hoskyns is an early example of this last approach. The most recent and most thorough example is Maarten Menken, who proposes that the changes were deliberate and were a result of Johannine editing and that the way the changes were effected was one that was in keeping with first century exegetical techniques.

Of additional concern are the formulas used to introduce these quotations.⁵ While there is substantial variety in the wording of these formulas, some appear more frequently than others. Specifically some scholars have argued that one formula, which occurs in some variation of the form 'in order that the Scripture might be fulfilled,' seems to appear only in the Passion material and in material closely associated with it. Some have proposed that this suggests a special source for the Passion.

1. *A Peculiar Text*

With this brief description of the overall topic as a context, this study seeks to focus on one particular text: John 17:12. Although commentators (in the literal sense of the word, i.e. those who have written commentaries on the entire gospel) are inevitably forced to make

⁴ Menken makes reference to this agreement (*Quotations* 206). He states his own conviction in this regard in his Conclusions (*Quotations* 205). Three texts agree verbatim with the LXX (10:34; 12:38; 19:24). Of the other citations, four appear to be based on the Hebrew rather than the LXX. (12:38; 12:40; 13:18; 19:37). The others reflect the Septuagint rather than the Hebrew although they are not in verbatim agreement with either.

⁵ See, for example, G. Reim, *Hintergrund* 10; C. A. Evans, "On the Quotation Formulas in the Fourth Gospel," *BZ* 26 (1982): 79–82.

some judgment regarding this text, those who have dedicated monographs to John's use of Scripture have paid it considerably less attention.

For example, although Edwin Freed discusses it, he does so in only two and a half pages. Günter Reim also treats it but gives it only his (customary) short treatment of one and a half pages. Bruce Schuchard omits it from consideration, arguing that 'although in [this] instance a formula plainly directs the reader's attention to the Old Testament, no discrete Old Testament passage is actually cited.'⁶ In his book, Maarten Menken likewise omits it from treatment, mentioning it in a footnote as one of two texts 'where we meet quotation formulae without a specific quotation.'⁷

So the question presents itself whether the text merits study. I would propose that indeed the text does merit study and that what can be discovered indicates that, in fact, the study of this citation belongs alongside that of the other texts and indeed could be said to have a unique place among them.

This text to which I refer occurs within the Last Discourses of the gospel, specifically within 17:1–26, the section that is often referred to as the 'High Priestly Prayer of Jesus.' If one adopts the common, five-part division of the discourses (i.e. 13:31–14:31; 15:1–17; 15:18–16:3b; 16:4b–33 and 17:1–26), the High Priestly Prayer occupies the last. For our purposes, it is of chief importance that we recognize the internal unity of 17:1–26 itself.

The text in question occurs in 17:12 and reads: καὶ οὐδεὶς ἐξ αὐτῶν ἀπώλετο εἰ μὴ ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀπωλείας, ἵνα ἡ γραφὴ πληρωθῇ. ('and none of them was destroyed, except the son of destruction, in order that the Scripture might be fulfilled'). The αὐτῶν mentioned here, as is clear from the surrounding context, refers to the disciples. The so-called fulfillment formula is one of the two formulae that occur most frequently in the gospel and the one that (as is commonly noted) occurs with consistency although with some minor variation from 12:37 on. Finally, it should be noted that the traditional translation renders υἱὸς τῆς ἀπωλείας as 'son of perdition' (as in the title of this study). However, the noun here is from the same root as that of the verb earlier in the verse. In order to reflect this similarity, I have chosen to translate both by the root 'destroy' even though

⁶ Schuchard, *Scripture*, xiii–xiv.

⁷ Menken, *Quotations*, 12, n. 3.

an argument could be made for translating the verb by 'lost.' Elsewhere I will use the more traditional rendition.

2. *Past Proposals*

In spite of the fact that the verse has come in for relatively little attention by scholars, there are five proposals regarding the text which are detailed below.

The first proposal focuses on the term 'son of perdition' and argues that the phrase is derived from similar usage in the OT. Among the OT passages cited are, for example, Isa 34:5 τὸν λαὸν τῆς ἀπωλείας ('the people of destruction') and Isa 57:4 τέκνα ἀπωλείας ('children of destruction'). Of course none of these is an exact parallel, but it is easy to see that there is a similarity in the overall construction of the phrase.⁸ It is argued that the phrase which appears in John 17:12 is modeled on these earlier ones. This is the view adopted by Bultmann, who saw the reference to Scripture being fulfilled in this designation of Judas. He comments "... he protected and guarded his own, so that none of them was lost, except the one who was so destined."⁹

The phrase also appears elsewhere in the New Testament in 2 Thess 2:3, where it denotes an eschatological figure associated with the second coming of Christ. While we may reasonably assume (although not absolutely in the case of 2 Thess) that the Pauline text is earlier than the Johannine one, there is no reason to suspect that there was influence from Paul to John.

A second proposal has been made by Freed who claimed that the text is to be read in connection with 6:70–71 and 18:9. John 6:70–71 reads: "Jesus answered them, "Did I not choose you to be the Twelve and one of you is a devil? He was referring to Judas the son of Simon, the Iscariot. For this one was about to hand him over although he was one of the Twelve." 18:9 reads: "Therefore, if you seek me,

⁸ Among those who note the similarity is Bultmann (*The Gospel of John. A Commentary* [Philadelphia: Westminster, 1970] 504, n. 2) He sees these passages as providing the pattern for the formation of υἱὸς ἀπωλείας. Bultmann sees a general reference to 13:18, which also speaks of the betrayer, but he does not suggest a possible source for the Scripture reference itself other than the similarities to the OT passages mentioned above.

⁹ Bultmann, *Gospel*, 504.

allow these to depart, in order that the word might be fulfilled which he spoke "I did not lose one of those whom you have given me."

In this case, there is the awkwardness created by the fact that 6:70–71 and 18:9 are words spoken by Jesus rather than quotations of Scripture. Freed recognizes this and simply says that the evangelist does not 'consider John 17:12 a quotation in the usual sense.'¹⁰ However, this is unlikely. The gospel always distinguishes between the word of Jesus and Scripture even though both have their origin in God.¹¹ Examples where the word of Jesus and the word of Scripture are distinguished can be found in 2:22 and in 5:37–40. Scholars have generally rejected Freed's view.¹² Thus while 18:9 may refer back to 6:70–71 (or to some other text), 17:12 stands on its own and it is necessary to look for parallels in the OT, not in the words of Jesus.¹³

The third proposal is that the text is to be read in connection with Prov 24:22a. In spite of his opinion that 17:12 is to be understood in connection with 6:70–71 and 18:9, Freed also speculated about the possibility of Prov 24:22a as the source of the Scripture. Prov 24:22a (LXX) reads λόγον φυλασσόμενος υἱὸς ἀπωλείας ἐκτὸς ἔσται ('the son keeping the word will be outside destruction.').¹⁴ It is curious that this verse contains three of the more significant words of John 17:12 (φυλασσόμενος, υἱὸς, and ἀπωλείας). Freed speculates: "Has Judas become a son of destruction because he had not kept the commandment?" However, Freed himself does not think this view is correct nor that the Proverbs text is the one referred to. He concludes with his previous judgment: "I... think the fulfillment refers to Jesus' own words spoken in John 6:70f."

¹⁰ Freed, *Quotations*, 96. W. Sproston ("The Scripture' in John 17:12," in *Scripture: Meaning and Method* [ed. B. P. Thompson; Hull: Hull Univ, 1987], 24–36) proposes something similar.

¹¹ Rather than saying that the evangelist does not distinguish between the words of Jesus and the words of Scripture, it is more appropriate that statements such as 18:9 (and 17:32) indicate that the use of "fulfillment" language for the words of Jesus indicates that the community was beginning to consider them as being on a par with Scripture.

¹² See for example, R. E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John*, (2 vols.; AB 29–29a; Garden City: Doubleday, 1966–70) 2:760; R. Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St. John* (3 vols; vol. 1; New York: Herder and Herder, 1966; vol. 2–3; New York: Crossroad, 1980–82), 182.

¹³ So also Brown, *Gospel*, 760.

¹⁴ Freed, *Quotations*, 95–98.

This proposal, that 17:12 refers to Prov 24:22a, also has gained no following. It is either ignored or rejected by scholars, including, as we have seen, even Freed himself. Schnackenburg is one of the few to note it and he rejects it, proposing that Freed has misunderstood the Proverbs' text and has taken υἱὸς ἀπωλείας as a single phrase rather than recognizing that ἀπωλείας is in the genitive with ἐκτὸς, not with υἱὸς.¹⁵

A fourth proposal was made by J. Danielou in 1974.¹⁶ In a brief article, he argued that the Johannine text refers to Gen 49:16–17 where the tribe of Dan appears symbolically as a snake in an image designed originally to describe the clever rise to power of this small tribe. Danielou notes that, in later literature, specifically in *TDan* 5:4, Dan predicts that his sons will apostatize in the last days and that the devil is their leader. In later Christian tradition, e.g. Irenaeus and Hippolytus, this was understood to indicate that the Antichrist would come from the tribe of Dan (cf. Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.* 5.30) and perhaps be Dan himself.¹⁷

Danielou then points that there are three parallels between Judas and OT Dan. Judas is one of the twelve disciples, as Dan is one of the twelve sons of Jacob. The identification of Judas as 'son of perdition' in John 17:12 makes him a prefigurement of the Antichrist; just as Dan and his tribe are OT prefigurements of final apostasy. Finally, according to John 13:27, Judas is a devil; and, according to *TDan* 5:4, Dan was seen as a devil. Because of this, Danielou argues that, when the author of 17:12 thinks of Scripture, he thinks of Gen 49:16 as interpreted within the Jewish apocalyptic tradition of the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs and within the early Fathers. This proposal also has a number of weaknesses and has gained no acceptance. The most obvious problem is the fact that the 'Scripture' proposed as that referred to in John 17:12 is not the actual text of Gen 49:17 at all, but an apocalyptic and extra-canonical interpretation of it.

¹⁵ Schnackenburg, *Gospel III*, 436–37, n. 49.

¹⁶ J. Danielou, "Le fils de perdition (Joh. 17,12)," in *Mélanges d'histoire des religions offerts à Henri-Charles Puech* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1974), 187–89.

¹⁷ Some (e.g. A. Collins, *The Apocalypse* [New Testament Message 22; Collegeville: Liturgical, 1979], 52–53) would see this tradition reflected in Rev 7:6 where, in the listing of the twelve tribes, Dan is replaced by Manasseh. But for a fuller treatment and a rejection of this proposal, see D. E. Aune, *Revelation* (3 vols.; WBC 52A–C; Dallas: Word Books, 1998), 1:462–63.

A fifth, and by far the most common, opinion is that 17:12 refers to John 13:18 which, in turn, refers to Psalm 41:10. There are two constituent parts to this view. First, there is the opinion of scholars that 13:18 ("but in order that the Scripture may be fulfilled, the one eating my bread has raised his heel against me.") refers to Ps 41:10 in a form which combines elements of both the LXX and the Hebrew text. I think that this is, in the main, correct and does not need to be discussed further.

The second element of this view is that 17:12 somehow refers to 13:18. The point to notice here is that 13:18, which clearly refers to Judas, is founded on a Scripture text that speaks of one who turns his heel against the one with whom he has eaten bread. However, there are problems in seeing this as referred to in 17:12. While there is certainly a reference to Judas in both passages, there is nothing in 17:12 that could be construed as hinting at any aspect of Ps 41:10. The text of 17:12 makes no reference to Judas as a betrayer, or as one eating with Jesus, but only as one who was lost and who can now be identified as 'the son of perdition.' It must be said that to see such a reference as something that could be described as 'the fulfillment of Scripture' is at best quite awkward. Yet, perhaps because there seems to be no better alternative, scholars such as Barrett, Reim, Brown, Schnackenburg, Carson, Wilckens, Lindars, Moloney (and others) hold this view. Schnackenburg, who dedicates a page and a half to the discussion of the verse ultimately concludes, with others, that 17:12 refers back to 13:18. He describes it as 'a justification on Jesus' part with regard to the traitor, whom he himself chose from among the twelve.'

J. Becker suggested a variant of this position in an article in 1969.¹⁸ In this variant, v12b-e is explained as an addition by an editor. As evidence of editing, Becker points to five features of the verse: (1) the seemingly awkward repetition of *τηρέιν* and *φυλάσσειν*; (2) the peculiar mention of Judas, which is the only mention of a human individual in the entire prayer of chap 17; (3) the mention of 'fulfillment' which, according to Becker, reflects a promise/fulfillment schema not present elsewhere in the prayer; (4) the appearance of 'son of perdition,' a title which appears nowhere else in the Johannine

¹⁸ J. Becker, "Aufbau, Schichtung und theologiegeschichtliche Stellung des Gebetes in Johannes 17," *ZNW* 60 (1969): 56-83, here 73-74.

literature; and finally (5) the fact that v13 follows v12a better than it does v12e.

In his commentary, Schnackenburg finds this proposal attractive and observes that v12b is “superfluous in this context (v. 13 follows v. 12a quite easily). It is not in accordance with the style . . . and its details make it quite different from the rest. For these reasons, it may well have been introduced by a second author, possibly an editor, with a special interest in the figure of the traitor. . . .”¹⁹ In spite of these factors, Schnackenburg himself concludes that “the reasons for excluding the digression about the ‘son of perdition’ from the original prayer are also not completely convincing.”²⁰ In any event, the presence of editing would only push the question of the source being referred to back to the editor rather than placing it in the lap of the evangelist.

In the end we see five proposals, one which does not speak of anything other than distant parallels in the OT to the term ‘the son of perdition’ itself. Two other proposals, both associated with Edwin Freed, have also been almost universally rejected. A fourth rests on an extra-canonical interpretation of Scripture rather than Scripture itself. The one that attributes the latter part of the verse to an editor is of no particular help and the one that remains is, as we have seen, very awkward and unsatisfying.

3. *A New Way Forward*

However, there is another approach to the problem; and this approach holds some promise for a better understanding of the verse and the Scripture that is fulfilled in it.

I would argue that the Scripture referred to is Prov 24:22a (the text first mentioned by Freed). However, I would make a very different argument for the proposal than did Freed. I would suggest that the relevance of this Scripture to the verse is twofold. The Scripture is fulfilled explicitly in the fact that the disciples are guarded from perdition and implicitly in the fact that Judas has become ‘the son of perdition.’ In the past, scholars seem to have presumed that the

¹⁹ Schnackenburg, *Gospel* 3, 182.

²⁰ Schnackenburg, *Gospel* 3, 182.

Scripture refers only to the loss of Judas. That does not do justice to the context. It refers to both the 'faithful' disciples and to Judas. Let us examine this more closely in relation to the Johannine context.

3.1. *The Portrayal of the Disciples in 17:1–11*

First is the overall context of 17:12. The first verses of the chapter (vv1–5) clearly refer to Jesus and speak of his petition that the Father glorify him with the glory which he had before the world existed.

However, beginning in v6, the prayer switches to petition for the disciples. There can be no doubt that from v6 to v19 the entire focus is on the (faithful) disciples. They belonged to the Father and they were given to Jesus (v6). They have kept the word of the Father (v6). They know that all Jesus has is from the Father and that Jesus has given them the words that he received from the Father and they believe that Jesus was sent by the Father (vv7–8).

In v9–11b, Jesus says that he prays on behalf of the disciples whom the Father has given Jesus and not on behalf of the world. The disciples belonged to the Father and now they belong to Jesus and Jesus has been glorified in them. Jesus is no longer in the world but they are. As a result (v11c) Jesus prays that the Father keep them in his name so they might be one as Jesus as the Father are one.

Then in v12, Jesus recalls that he has "kept them in your name and I guarded them and none of them was destroyed" (except for Judas, the son of perdition). And this happened so the Scripture might be fulfilled.

If we recall the comments of Bultmann, Schnackenburg, Brown, and Freed, it is clear that they all understand the fulfillment of Scripture to refer to 'the son of perdition.'²¹ But this really is not the case. Jesus has been praying for the disciples, not for all twelve of them but only for the eleven. He says explicitly that he does not pray for the world! In this context, Judas is certainly to be associated with the world. There is no doubt that 17:12 refers to Judas when it speaks of 'the son of perdition' but it should also be clear that the loss of Judas has not been the focus.

²¹ See also D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 563 ("The reference to the fulfillment of Scripture also assures the reader that the defection of Judas is foreseen by Scripture . . .").

3.2. *Prov 24:22a and the Disciples Who Are Faithful*

The second point then, is that Prov 24:22a speaks precisely of the son who keeps the word of God and so avoids perdition! Prov 24:22a reads λόγον φυλασσόμενος υἱὸς ἀπωλείας ἐκτὸς ἔσται. In English, the verse would read literally: ‘the Son keeping the word will be outside perdition.’ In other words, the obedient son will not undergo perdition or destruction.

As an aside here, it is important to note, as Schnackenburg points out, that in Prov 24:22a, ἀπωλείας does not modify υἱὸς. Schnackenburg thought that Freed misunderstood the verse and took these two words together. But *there is no reference to a ‘son of perdition’* in Prov 24:22a. The verse speaks of the obedient son who avoids perdition. As I have pointed out, in the Johannine passage, the main focus is also on those who are *not* lost, namely the ‘eleven’ disciples. And that is why Prov 24:22a is appropriate.

If this general correspondence seems correct, then we may ask about other aspects of the relation between the two texts. First, it should be noted that in the Proverbs text the son ‘guards’ (in the sense of obeying) the word of God (λόγον φυλασσόμενος). In 17:6, the same thing is said of the disciples; they had kept the word of the Father (καὶ τὸν λόγον σου τετήρηκαν). This is precisely what is said to have kept the ‘son’ from perdition in Prov 24:22a. Thus what is said of the disciples in 17:6–11 is lauded by Prov 24:22a. This is a more specific correspondence not only in concept but also in terminology.

Second, in the Greek of John 17:12bc, we read: ἐγὼ ἐτήρουν αὐτοὺς ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί σου ᾧ δέδωκάς μοι, καὶ ἐφύλαξα καὶ οὐδεις ἐξ αὐτῶν κτλ.²² The repetition of words for ‘keeping’ (τηρεῖν) and ‘guarding’ (φυλάσσειν) is peculiar. Especially peculiar are two aspects of the use of φυλάσσειν. Not only is it used alone without an object or other

²² There is a textual problem in the verse. Some manuscripts read ὅς δέδωκάς μοι while others read ᾧ δέδωκάς μοι. The clause is omitted altogether in the original hand of P⁶⁶ and in Sinaiticus. The basic issue is whether this is the name that you gave me (dative by assimilation) or those whom you gave me (referring to the disciples). In spite of the early attestation of the clause’s omission, the preponderance of witnesses attests to its presence. The more reliable witnesses also attest to the dative rather than the accusative. This is the position taken in the UBS and Nestle editions. See also K. Aland, “Neue neutestamentliche Papyri,” *NTS* 10 (1963–64): 67.

modifier, the word itself is unusual in John.²³ Yet the fact that the word appears in the Prov 24:22a suggests that perhaps it is introduced here by the Johannine author as a verbal echo of that verse.²⁴

Third, beyond the verbal echo of φυλάσσειν in the Johannine text, there is also the presence of υἱὸς and ἀπωλείας. It seems fair to say then that we have not only a general correspondence in thought but also a verbal echo in what are arguably the three most significant words in the verse from Proverbs.

3.3. *A Potential Problem?*

There is of course one difference between the meaning of the text in Proverbs and the Johannine text. In Proverbs, the focus is on the action of the (faithful) son (it is the son who ‘guards’) while in 17:12, the focus is on the action of Jesus (it is Jesus who ‘guards’).

However, this is not a problem for the proposal put forward here but rather reflects the complex attitude of the Johannine author toward human responsibility. At times the responsibility for faithfulness rests on the election of the disciples *by Jesus*, at other times it rests on the fact that the disciples are given by *the Father* and at other times on the responsibility *of the disciples themselves*. Let us look at this briefly.

First it is evident that the disciples are ‘given’ to Jesus by the Father. This is shown clearly in four texts outside of chapter 17 (6:39, 64; 10:29; 18:9) and in four texts within chapter 17 prior to v12 (17:2, 6, 7, 9).

Second, there are texts that speak of election by Jesus. In several of these, it is stated explicitly that those who are given cannot be lost (6:39; 10:28, 29; 18:9).²⁵ In all of these, there is a clear emphasis on the action of Jesus. This is what is found in 17:12 (ὅτε ἤμην

²³ It appears elsewhere only in 12:25,47.

²⁴ It may be that the Johannine author now applies the word φυλάσσειν (“guard”) to Jesus and so it may be his intention to show that (through a kind of peshet exegesis) that it was really Jesus who preserved (ἐφύλαξα) the disciples whom he had chosen.

²⁵ We will omit 17:12 for the moment. We will also exclude 6:70 (Οὐκ ἐγὼ ὑμᾶς τοὺς δώδεκα ἐξελεξάμην; καὶ ἐξ ὑμῶν εἷς διάβολός ἐστιν.) and 13:18 (οὐ περὶ πάντων ὑμῶν λέγω· ἐγὼ οἶδα τίνας ἐξελεξάμην·) although they speak of election, they do not speak of being “given.”

μετ' αὐτῶν ἐγὼ ἐτήρουν αὐτοὺς ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί σου ᾧ δέδωκάς μοι, καὶ ἐφύλαξα, καὶ οὐδεὶς ἐξ αὐτῶν ἀπώλετο εἰ μὴ ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀπωλείας, ἵνα ἡ γραφὴ πληρωθῇ.).

But what is the relationship between this and the responsibility of the disciples to believe? This is expressed in 6:64–65 ἀλλ' εἰσὶν ἐξ ὑμῶν τινες οἳ οὐ πιστεύουσιν. ἤδει γὰρ ἐξ ἀρχῆς ὁ Ἰησοῦς τίνες εἰσίοι μὴ πιστεύοντες καὶ τίς ἐστὶν ὁ παραδώσων αὐτόν. καὶ ἔλεγεν, Διὰ τοῦτο εἶρηκα ὑμῖν ὅτι οὐδεὶς δύναται ἐλθεῖν πρὸς με εἰ μὴ ἡ δεδομένον αὐτῷ ἐκ τοῦ πατρός. ('But there are some of you who do not believe.' For Jesus knew from the beginning those not believing and who his betrayer was. And he said, 'Because of this I have said to you that no one is able to come to me unless it be given to him from the Father.')

These two aspects of belief have also appeared in 17:1–11. Jesus has said that the disciples have kept the Father's word—and he has prayed for them. As a result the same combination in 17:12 should not be thought to be unusual. The Johannine author has attempted to combine these two viewpoints just as he did in 6:64–65 and 17:1–11. Both aspects are necessary for one to be truly safe, as is clear from the case of Judas who did not keep the word of the Father and who was not protected by Jesus.

3.4. *Prov 24:22a and 'The Son of Perdition'*

Now let us turn to an examination of Prov 24:22a and its relation to the description of Judas as 'the son of perdition.' The sole exception to the preservation of the disciples that we have been speaking of is Judas. He did not keep the word of God and so was not protected from destruction. But then how does Judas come to be called specifically 'the son of perdition'? There are three factors that converge to suggest that the impetus for applying this term to Judas also comes from Prov 24:22a. First, as we have seen, according to Prov 24:22a, the son who keeps the word of God is ἀπωλείας ἐκτός ('outside destruction', i.e. preserved from destruction). This son is (implicitly) contrasted with the son who does not keep the word of God and who will therefore be subject to perdition. This 'second' son will be, to identify him in terms of the context in Prov 24:22a, the υἱὸς ἀπωλείας ('the son of perdition').

The second factor is the word order of the verse. In Proverbs 24:22a, we find the words υἱὸς ἀπωλείας side-by-side. It would be

very easy to misread the Proverbs text so as to make the text refer to 'the son of perdition,' (which, of course, it does not); but the juxtaposition of the two words makes the further word-formation quite plausible. Thus, the formation of the term is suggested not only by the overall thought of Prov 24:22a but also by the very word order of the Proverbs verse.

But this is not all. There is a third factor that would facilitate the formation of such a title. Although the actual term υἱὸς ἀπωλείας had not appeared in OT literature previously, similar forms had. We mentioned some of these at the outset, for example Isa 34:5 τὸν λαὸν τῆς ἀπωλείας ('the people of destruction') and Isa 57:4 τέκνα ἀπωλείας ('children of destruction'), it could well be that it was on the model of these (and in the context of Prov 24:22a) that the expression υἱὸς ἀπωλείας is formed.

Does this mean that John has actually coined the phrase 'son of perdition'? Two points seem significant here. First, there is the presence of the term 'son of perdition' in 2 Thess 2:3. While the dating of 2 Thess is problematic, it is likely that it antedates the Gospel of John. If it does, then one could at least argue that John was not the first to coin the phrase. But of course there is no indication that John knew the Pauline expression and so it could be that John coined the term independently of Paul.

But I think there is a slight indication that perhaps even the author of Prov 24:22a was aware of the existence of such a title. As I have commented on several times in this paper, when the reader reads the verse for the first time, he/she can easily be startled by the statement which seems to say that the one who keeps the word of God is a son of perdition! But of course the author then clarifies this by the clever post positive positioning of ἐκτὸς: he son who keeps the word of God is *outside* perdition. Was this a play on words and an attempt to get the reader's attention? There is of course no way to prove it, but the possibility is certainly there.

Conclusion

Whatever may be the situation with regard to the origin of the phrase, I would argue that, on the basis of the foregoing, a strong case can be made for the view that the Scripture text referred to in John 17:12 is not so general that it cannot be determined, nor is it

best explained by the awkward reference to Ps 41 quoted in 13:18. Rather the verse refers to Prov 24:22a and that the fulfillment spoken of is found not just in the faithlessness of Judas but also in the faithfulness of the disciples who are saved from perdition. In fact, in contrast to the traditional view that the fulfillment refers only to Judas, I think it is correct to say that it refers most explicitly to the disciples who are saved and only implicitly to Judas who is lost.

If Prov 24:22a is the source of the reference in 17:12, then we also have advanced the overall study of the Johannine use of Scripture yet another step. It was noted at the outset that there is no single source for all the Johannine quotations of Scripture. However, if Prov 24:22a is the source of the reference in 17:12, then we have another case of an unequivocal instance of the Johannine author making use of the LXX since this verse represents a recensional difference on the part of the LXX and does not appear, in any form, in the Hebrew text!

Why has there been so little attention paid to Prov 24:22a in relation to John 17:12? I do not know. It is true that, if one assumes that the focus in 17:12 is on falling away of Judas as what is fulfilled, then the relevance of Prov 24:22a is not as evident. At any rate, it certainly seems that, in a fuller context, the Proverbs text has much to offer as a source of the reference in John 17:12.²⁶

²⁶ It should be noted that in the arrest scene of 18:9, the evangelist sees in Jesus' petition that the disciples be allowed to depart without being arrested the fulfillment of a "word" of Jesus (18:8b-9: εἰ οὖν ἔμε ζητεῖτε, ἄφετε τοὺτους ὑπάγειν· ἵνα πληρωθῇ ὁ λόγος ὃν εἶπεν ὅτι Οὐκ δέδωκάς μοι οὐκ ἀπώλεσα ἐξ αὐτῶν οὐδένα.) What is significant here is the fact that the non-loss of disciples is the topic of another fulfillment text, but here it is said to show the fulfillment of the word of Jesus rather than of Scripture. What can be said of this? First, it should be observed that, although there would seem to at least *prima facie* evidence that 18:9 does refer to the words of 17:11-12, scholars are hardly in agreement that they do. 17:12 does not make reference to "those whom you have given me" (as does 18:9). Of course there is a textual variant in 17:12 which reads οὐς rather than φ. But that variant is not supported sufficiently to be considered the original reading. Second, there is a significant difference between 17:12 and 18:9 in that 17:12 speaks of the safekeeping of the disciples in general; 18:9 speaks of a specific occurrence. Third, ἀπώλεια generally refers to eschatological destruction, i.e. the destruction given out to the forces of evil at the time of the eschatological judgment (Matt 7:13; Acts 8:20; Rom 9:22; Phil 1:28; 3:19; 1 Tim 6:9; Heb 10:39; 2 Pet 2:1; 3:7; Rev 17:8, 11). This fits the scene of 17:12 where the "loss" (or "destruction") has to do with the infidelity of Judas. In 18:9, the reference is to the possibility of arrest or death of the disciples by the arresting party. These would seem to be considerably different understandings of the context and meaning of the term ἀπόλλυμι. Some think that

Theologically, John 17:12 is consistent with and provides one more perspective on the view first expressed in John 3:16: "God so loved the world that he sent his unique Son so that whoever believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life." The root of the verb ἀπόλλυμι and the noun ἀπώλεια is used regularly to refer to eschatological damnation, as commentators have pointed out. The 'loss,' 'perdition,' or 'destruction' referred to is nothing less than final destruction. Jesus has protected those who believe in him; they do not undergo eschatological destruction but enter into eternal life. This is the message of 3:16. It is the message of 6:64–65. And it is also the object of Jesus' prayer in chap 17. Chapter 17:12 gives the reader the assurance that this is not only the will of Jesus and the Father, it is predicted in Scripture.

18:9 is a superficial understanding of the meaning that is communicated better in 17:12. Brown (*Gospel*, 811–12) does not suggest a conclusion but simply points out (1) that there is no text that can be said to be quoted verbatim; (2) that if the textual variant is taken in 17:11 (12), then that verse is quite close. Perhaps more likely is Bultmann's suggestion (*Gospel*, 640) that it refers to 6:39 (τοῦτο δέ ἐστιν τὸ θέλημα τοῦ πέμψαντός με, ἵνα πάν ὃ δέδωκέν μοι μὴ ἀπολέσω ἐξ αὐτοῦ,) ("This is the will of the one sending me that I not lose any of that which he has given me."). This is also close to 18:9 but it is expressed here as the will of the Father rather than as the words of Jesus himself. Yet throughout the gospel we read that the words of Jesus are precisely the words of the Father who sent him (cf. 8:26, 28, 38; 12:49–50). Thus it seems that 18:9 merits its own separate treatment and should not be construed as referring to 17:12.

PERJURY IN ANCIENT RELIGION AND MODERN LAW:
A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF PERJURY IN HOMER
AND UNITED STATES LAW

John T. Fitzgerald

The modern western world is vastly different from that of the ancient Mediterranean.¹ We differ from our predecessors not only in politics, law, religion, philosophy, and cultural life, but also in the languages we speak. These differences are what make the study of the ancient world so fascinating and yet so difficult. Only by learning the languages of antiquity can we hope to acquire an adequate understanding of cultures and concepts so unlike our own. Yet, even when we have learned Greek, Latin, Hebrew, and other ancient languages, we may remain oblivious to the different denotations and connotations that modern and ancient terms often have. This is particularly true of terms that are used in both the secular and the religious sphere. The secular connotations of the modern English word “sacrifice,” for example, are markedly different from the religious implications of ancient sacrificial terms. Whereas the emphasis in

¹ An earlier version of this essay was scheduled to appear in the *International Journal of Comparative Religion and Philosophy*, but that periodical ceased publication before my study appeared. I am delighted that a greatly revised version can now appear in a *Festschrift* honoring David E. Aune, whose daunting erudition has greatly enriched our understanding of early Christianity and thereby helped modern scholars become acutely aware of how our world differs from that of the first Christians. Although I do not deal directly with the biblical text in this essay, I believe that a heightened awareness of the differences between the modern and ancient understandings of perjury will sharpen the exegetical work of biblical scholars. For example, NT scholars almost invariably speak of Peter as “denying” Jesus. That is, of course, true, as the repeated use of the word “deny” by each of the four canonical evangelists makes clear (Matt 26:34–35, 70, 72, 75; Mark 14:30–31, 68, 70, 72; Luke 22:34, 57, 61; John 13:38; 18:25, 27). But that traditional designation misses an important aspect of the story in both Matthew and Mark, viz., that Peter denies Jesus with an oath (Matt 26:72, 74; Mark 14:71). That makes Peter guilty of perjury, for he knowingly swears an assertory oath that is blatantly false. Peter’s perjury compounds his guilt, making his denial not merely a personal failure in his relationship with Jesus but a religious offense against God. Not even those who gave false testimony against Jesus at his trial dared to do so under oath, making Peter’s perjury singularly conspicuous.

ancient biblical texts is placed on the joyful giving of something to God, the modern secular emphasis falls on what an individual gives up in order to attain something of greater value. The former stresses the recipient of the sacrifice; the latter does not even contemplate a recipient of the action and stresses instead the sacrificer's renunciation and purpose.²

Religion and law share numerous terms, yet the modern understanding of these terms and the social world implied by them is often quite different from that held in antiquity. One such term is "adoption," which to the modern reader almost always suggests a legal process whereby adults adopt children who are not physically related to them. This type of adoption is found in the ancient Mediterranean world, but it is simply one type among many. For example, it was also common to adopt adults, and the adopter and the adoptee were often already related prior to the adoption. There are even instances of men adopting their wives as their daughters, though it was much more common for women to be adopted as a prelude to giving them in marriage. The manumission of slaves frequently involved adoption, yet even the sale of land might involve the buyer being adopted by the seller. Finally, the relationship created by the adoption might not even be that of parent-child, for one could also be adopted as a brother or a sister.³

As the preceding paragraph suggests, adoption in antiquity was clearly different from that practiced today. An awareness of the differences is important, for it serves to broaden the perspective from which the ancient discussions of adoption are to be viewed, and it helps prevent the modern reader from interpreting the ancient world in light of contemporary adoptive practices. A similar awareness is needed in regard to other terms shared by religion and law.

Another example of a legal and religious term with sharply divergent meanings and connotations in antiquity and today is "perjury." These differences include not only the settings where perjury occurs and the punishment for this offense, but also the very definition of

² R. K. Yerkes, *Sacrifice in Greek and Roman Religions and Early Judaism* (New York: Scribner, 1952), 1–7, and R. J. Daly, *The Origins of the Christian Doctrine of Sacrifice* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1978), 1–4.

³ F. W. Knobloch, "Adoption," *ABD* 1 (1992): 76–79. On the use of the language of adoption in the Pauline corpus, see now J. C. Walters, "Paul, Adoption, and Inheritance," in *Paul in the Greco-Roman World: A Handbook* (ed. J. P. Sampley Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 2003), 42–76.

the term and the relevance of intentionality to that definition. Despite their importance, these differences are not generally recognized, even by historians of religion, classicists, and legal historians. This lack of awareness is partially the consequence of the scholarly neglect of the history of perjury, which, despite its importance to theology, legal theory, and social practice, has been the subject of surprisingly little research.⁴ The result has been a tendency to read modern legal understandings of perjury into the various ancient terms for that offense. The purpose of this essay is to point out some of the main differences between ancient Greek and contemporary conceptions by comparing Homer's understanding of perjury with that prevalent today in the United States.

By focusing on Homer, I do not intend to suggest either that he is typical for antiquity as a whole or that his understanding of perjury is that of all subsequent Greeks. On the contrary, changes in the concept of perjury already appear in ancient Greek thought and prove that the debate about perjury begins in antiquity. It is precisely because of these later debates and developments that discussion needs to begin with Homer. He is the first Greek to mention perjury, and in linguistic studies it is important to pay close attention to the earliest instances of a term. Furthermore, Homer's importance for subsequent Greek antiquity can scarcely be exaggerated. The enormous influence of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* is evident in Greek culture of all periods, so that Homer's ideas and concepts had a continuing influence on Greek thought and practice.⁵ In comparing

⁴ Important studies of the history of perjury include those by F. E. von Liszt, *Meineid und falsches Zeugnis: Eine strafrechtsgeschichtliche Studie* (Vienna: Manz'sche h.h. Hof-Verlags- und Universitäts-Buchhandlung, 1876); S. Kuttner, *Die juristische Natur der falschen Beweisaussage* (Abhandlungen des kriminalistischen Instituts an der Universität Berlin, 4th Series, 1.4; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1931); and H. Silving, "The Oath," *The Yale Law Journal* 68 (1959): 1329–90, 1527–77. Still indispensable for comparative and cross-cultural studies of perjury is the collection of texts and ethnological analysis by R. Lasch, *Der Eid: Seine Entstehung und Beziehung zu Glaube und Brauch der Naturvölker* (Studien und Forschungen zur Menschen- und Völkerkunde 5; Stuttgart: Strecker & Schröder, 1908), 91–99. For treatments of perjury in ancient Greece, see esp. R. Hirzel, *Der Eid* (Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1902), 75–79; K. Latte, "Meineid," *PW* 15.1 (1931): 346–57; J. Plescia, *The Oath and Perjury in Ancient Greece* (Tallahassee: Florida State University Press, 1970), 83–91.

⁵ For the purposes of this essay, it is sufficient to note that later rhetoricians used Homeric oaths in their own discussions of oaths and their classification. For example, in chap. 20 of his *On the Method of Forceful Speaking*, Ps.-Hermogenes says that "Homer was the first to swear an ethical [ἠθικόν] oath," by which he means, not

Homer to the United States, I choose the country whose legal system I know best and whose understanding of perjury is as secular as it is modern.

In the comparative analysis that follows, I shall begin by examining the modern and Homeric *Sitze im Leben* for perjury. Next, I shall turn to the questions of perjury's definition, of the role played by intentionality, and of the party responsible for punishing the perjurer. Finally, I shall conclude with a brief synopsis of the major results of this brief investigation.⁶

1. *The Sitz im Leben of Perjury*

In the United States today, the crime of perjury is usually restricted to false statements made in judicial or quasi-judicial proceedings and before individuals who are authorized to administer oaths that are required by law. That is, the modern context for perjury is primarily legal. The crime of perjury sometimes is extended in the statutes of the different states to include false oaths sworn in various official proceedings, but the paradigmatic *Sitz im Leben* is that of court testimony.⁷ In the ancient Greek world, by contrast, the term for per-

a moral oath, but an oath that reveals the character [ῆθος] of the person who speaks it. The example he cites is *Ody.* 20.339, which he also says was given in a special form of character that he terms "tragic." For a discussion, see B. P. Wallach, "Ps.-Hermogenes and the Characterizing Oath," *GRBS* 22 (1981): 257–67, esp. 261–64. A translation of *On the Method of Forceful Speaking* by George A. Kennedy is now available in *Invention and Method* (SBLWGRW 15; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2005), 201–67.

⁶ For some of the implications that the study of perjury has for biblical exegesis, see note 1 above and J. T. Fitzgerald, "The Problem of Perjury in Greek Context: Prolegomena to an Exegesis of Matthew 5:33; 1 Timothy 1:10; and *Didache* 2.3," in *The Social World of the First Christians* (ed. L. M. White and O. L. Yarbrough; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995), 156–77, "Eid: Neues Testament," *RGZ* 2 (1999): 1125–26, and "Ethics and Law Codes: Christianity," in *Religions of the Ancient World: A Guide* (ed. S. I. Johnston; Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2004), 527–30, esp. 528. A popular presentation of some of the ideas in this essay can be found in my "Let Your Yes Be Yes: Perjury Then and Now," *The Christian Century* 116:21 (July 28–August 4, 1999): 732–33.

⁷ E. M. Scheib, "U. S. Law of Perjury," *New Catholic Encyclopedia* (15 vols.; New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967), 11:140–41; J. E. Zelin, "Perjury," *American Jurisprudence* (2nd ed.; Rochester: The Lawyers Co-Operative Publishing Co; San Francisco: Bancroft-Whitney, 1988), 60A:1059–1149, esp. 1067–68; J. R. Nolan and J. M. Nolan-Haley, *Black's Law Dictionary* (6th ed.; St. Paul: West Publishing Co., 1990), 1139. Federal law recognizes only one basic offense in this area—that of perjury,

jury (ἐπιρκία) is used of false swearing in virtually all situations, both legal and non-legal. Of the various non-legal settings in which the possibility of perjury is contemplated, that of Greek religion will likely be of special interest to most readers of this essay.

The first references to perjury that involve religion occur in connection with the ancient Greek ritual known as the *Eidopfer* or “oath sacrifice.”⁸ There are two instances of this ritual in the *Iliad*, with the first described in Book 3 and the second in Book 19. Both the oath and the animal sacrifice that accompanies it are central to this ceremony. Indeed, the two are intimately connected both symbolically and linguistically. The formula that Homer uses to describe the sworn compact in these two cases is not “to swear trustworthy oaths,” but “to cut trustworthy oaths” (ὄρκια πιστὰ τέμνειν: 2.124; 3.73, 94, [105], 252, 256; [4.155]; 19.191). That is, the word ὄρκια in this formula refers to the animals that were slaughtered as part of the oath ceremony,⁹ and it is by means of the sacrifice of these victims

which is applicable to all forms of sworn, certified, or verified statements pursuant to various statutes and rules (see section 1621 of title 18, United States Code; see also section 1746 of title 28). At common law and according to some statutes, however, two separate and distinct offenses in this area are recognized—perjury and false swearing, with “the principal distinguishing factor . . . being that the false oath in perjury must be made in a judicial proceeding, whereas in false swearing it need not be made in such a proceeding” (Zelin, “Perjury,” 1068; see also R. M. Perkins and R. N. Boyce, *Criminal Law* [3rd ed.; Mineola, NY: Foundation Press, 1982], 511). In addition, perjury is typically differentiated from false swearing by the stipulation that the oath be one that is required by law, given with the intent to mislead, and made in a matter that is material to the issue in question. In some statutes, however, false swearing is treated as a less serious degree of perjury (Zelin, “Perjury,” 1068–69, and Perkins and Boyce, *Criminal Law*, 512).

⁸ M. P. Nilsson, *A History of Greek Religion* (2nd ed.; Oxford: Clarendon, 1949), 88–89, and *Geschichte der griechischen Religion* (Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft 5.2.1; 2 vols.; 3rd ed. of vol. 1; Munich: Beck, 1967), 1:46, 139–42; S. Eitrem and J. E. Fontenrose, “Sacrifice,” *OCD*² (1970): 943–45, esp. 944–45; Plescia, *Oath and Perjury*, 9–10; W. Burkert, *Greek Religion* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985), 250–54; and M. S. Kitts, “Not Barren Is the Blood of Lambs: Homeric Oath Sacrifice as Metaphorical Transformation,” *Kernos* 16 (2003): 17–34. See also Kitts’ “Oath-making in the *Iliad*” (Ph.D. Diss., Graduate Theological Union and the University of California, Berkeley, 1994).

⁹ See esp. *Il.* 3.245–246, where “two lambs and cheerful wine” are epexegetic of ὄρκια πιστὰ (“oaths of fidelity”), and 3.268–269. See also W. Leaf, *The Iliad* (2nd ed.; 2 vols.; London: Macmillan, 1900–1902), 1:137; J. R. S. Sterrett, *Homer’s Iliad: First Three Books and Selections* (New York: American Book Company, 1907), 149; M. M. Willcock, *The Iliad of Homer* (2 vols.; London: St. Martin’s Press, 1978–84), 2:275; G. S. Kirk, *The Iliad: A Commentary: Books 1–4* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 274, 310.

or "oath-offerings" that the words spoken in the oath ceremony are made binding and the sworn compact ratified.¹⁰ Thus, in Book 3 Agamemnon first cuts hair from the heads¹¹ of the three lambs¹² that are to be sacrificed (271–273), then later, after swearing the oath, cuts their throats (292–294). He follows the same two-fold cutting sequence on a boar in Book 19 (252–254, 266).¹³ In neither case, however, is the sacrificial animal roasted and eaten by the participants in a common meal, which, according to usual Greek practice, was the climax of the sacrifice (θυσία).¹⁴ Instead, the Trojans' lambs

¹⁰ "In origin ὄρκια and ὄρκος meant not 'oath' but 'object by which an oath is sworn', since a mere form of words was not considered sufficiently binding. . . . In the present passage [3.73–75] the objects sworn by, which seal the oath, are the sacrificial animals. So τάμνω means cut the throat of an animal as witness and guarantee of the oath" (J. T. Hooker, *Homer: Iliad III* (Bristol: Bristol Classical Press, 1979), 55).

¹¹ The cutting off of hair from the head is a standard preliminary act in ancient Greek sacrifice; see, e.g., *Od.* 3.446; 14.422–423; and Euripides, *El.* 810–812, where the hair from the animal is cast into the fire. Euripides, *Alc.* 73–76 reflects this practice and interprets it as a consecration of the victim to the gods below. The distribution of the hair among the chief participants at the ceremony (*Il.* 3.273–274) is atypical but plays an important function; like the libation in 3.295–301, it is designed to make all the leaders responsible for any breach of the treaty; see G. S. Kirk, "Some Methodological Pitfalls in the Study of Ancient Greek Sacrifice (in particular)," in *Le sacrifice dans l'antiquité* (ed. J. Rudhardt and O. Reverdin; Entretiens sur l'antiquité classique 27; Genève: Vandoeuvres, 1981), 41–80, esp. 63.

¹² The Trojans bring two lambs—a white male for the Sun and a black female for the Earth—and the Achaeans provide a third lamb (of unspecified color) for Zeus (*Il.* 3.103–104).

¹³ Homer's description of the two oath sacrifices is similar, but not identical. There are four major differences between them. First, in Book 3 the lambs' hair is distributed among the Trojan and Achaean chieftains so as to make them full participants in the oath sacrifice; nothing similar occurs in Book 19. Second, in Book 3 the lambs brought by the Trojans are taken back to Troy (310). The boar of Book 19, by contrast, is thrown into the sea (267–268). Third, wine plays a major role in the ceremony in Book 3 (246–247, 269–270, 295–301), but is not even mentioned in that of Book 19. Fourth, the ritual washing of hands, which was a regular preliminary to ancient sacrifice (see, e.g., *Il.* 1.449; *Od.* 3.440–441, 445) is mentioned in Book 3 (270) but not in Book 19. For the elements of the ancient oath scene, see esp. C. Callaway, "The Oath in Epic Poetry," (Ph.D. Diss., University of Washington, 1990); on the deviation from the typical pattern in three oath scenes involving Odysseus, see the latter's "Odysseus' Three Unsworn Oaths," *AJP* 119 (1998): 159–70.

¹⁴ See, for instance, Hom., *Il.* 1.447–471; 2.402–431; 7.313–322; 24.621–627; *Od.* 3.430–472; 12.353–365; 14.414–456; the discussion of Homeric sacrifices and meals by W. Arend, *Die typischen Szenen bei Homer* (2nd ed.; Berlin: Weidmann, 1975), 64–78, and, for Greece in general, M. Detienne and J.-P. Vernant, *The Cuisine of Sacrifice among the Greeks* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989). Indeed, according to Burkert, *Greek Religion*, 57, "the fundamental structure [of] animal sacrifice

are taken back to Troy (probably for proper disposal), and the boar is cast in the sea (3.310; 19.267–268).¹⁵ This non-consumption of the sacrificial meat makes the sacrifice functionally equivalent to a holocaust and thereby undergirds the utter solemnity of the oath ceremony.¹⁶ The gravity of the occasion is similarly indicated by the fact that the wine in Book 3 is neither mixed with water (4.159) nor drunk by the participants in the customary fashion. Instead, it is poured undiluted on the ground (295–296, 300).¹⁷ This conspicuous abstinence in regard to meat and wine contrasts starkly with the depiction of Pittacus of Mytilene (ca. 650–570 B.C.E.) given by

is ritualized slaughter followed by a common meal.” In Book 19, a meal does follow the oath ceremony (275), but the boar that was sacrificed is not consumed.

¹⁵ Homer fails to say what the Achaeans did with the lamb they had brought or what the Trojans did with their lambs once they had been brought back to Troy. His silence has led to numerous conjectures. Hooker, *Homer*, 64 suggests that Priam takes the lambs back to guard them, whereas Burkert, *Greek Religion*, 252, thinks that the Trojan lambs were put to profane use. Kirk, *Books 1–4*, 310, rightly rejects such suggestions and calls attention to Pausanias (5.24.10), who infers from the *Iliad* that “the ancient custom about victims was that no human being might eat of that on which an oath had been sworn” (trans. W. H. S. Jones and H. A. Ormerod, *Pausanias: Description of Greece* [5 vols.; LCL; London: Heinemann, 1918–35], 2.529, 531). If this inference is correct—and the scholia suggest that it is—the animals’ carcasses were probably buried (see Pausanias 3.20.9; 4.15.8), thrown into the water, or disposed of in some other suitable fashion (Kirk, *Books 1–4*, 310–11; see also Sterrett, *Homer’s Iliad*, 202, 205 and L. Gernet, *The Anthropology of Ancient Greece* [Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1981], 171. According to many scholars (e.g., Nilsson, *Geschichte*, 1:46, 140), the reason for this non-consumption of the sacrificial meat lies in the primitive belief that the victim contained the curse that was part and parcel of the oath. On *Il.* 19.266–269, see M. W. Edwards, *The Iliad: A Commentary: Books 17–20* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 266.

¹⁶ It is striking that the most conspicuous example of a holocaust in Homer involves the burning of a ram and a black ewe (*Ody.* 10.527) and a prayer to Hades and Persephone, the gods of the Underworld (10.533–534). This recalls the oath sacrifice in Book 3 of the *Iliad*, where the Trojans provide a white ram and a black ewe for the sacrifice, and Agamemnon’s prayer probably contains a veiled reference to Hades and Persephone (*Il.* 3.278–279). Unlike Jewish whole burnt offerings (especially the daily *tamid* sacrifices of Exod 29:38–42), Greek holocausts were infrequent, solemn, and intimately connected with the cult of chthonic powers. See esp. Yerkes, *Sacrifice*, 53–55, whose strict correlation of holocaust with chthonic sacrifice must be qualified in light of the judicious discussion by A. D. Nock, “The Cult of Heroes,” *HTR* 37 (1944): 141–74.

¹⁷ See *Il.* 2.341; 4.159; and Kirk, *Books 1–4*, 152, 302–3, who emphasizes the solemnity of the unmixed libation. For libation oaths, see esp. Gernet, *Anthropology*, 169–70, and compare the gods’ use of the water of Styx as a libation in their oaths. Since the latter is the gods’ “greatest and grimmest oath” (*Il.* 15.37–38), Hesiod (*Theog.* 782–806) says that any deity who commits perjury unleashes its odium and is thrown “into a cataleptic coma, the divine equivalent of death” (R. Janko, *The Iliad: A Commentary: Books 13–16* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992], 195).

Alcaeus, who lambastes his fellow citizen for “recklessly trampling the oaths underfoot and devouring our city.” Furthermore, by contemptuously calling the plump Pittacus “Pot-belly,” Alcaeus links excessive eating with perjury’s disdain for oaths (frg. 129).¹⁸

The terminological connection between animal sacrifice and compacts of various kinds is not confined to archaic Greece, but is both ancient and widespread. Among the ancient Hebrews, the technical phrase for making a covenant is *כרת ברית*, “to cut a covenant.”¹⁹ Among the ancient Romans, the standard phrase for making a treaty is *foedus ferire*, “to strike a treaty” (e.g., Livy 1.24.4). In all such instances, “the object of aggression that is to be ‘struck’ and ‘cut’ becomes virtually identical with the covenant itself.”²⁰ It is not surprising, therefore, that Homer uses the Greek formula to describe the truce between the Trojans and the Achaeans in Book 3 as well as the quasi-accord between Achilles and Agamemnon in Book 19.²¹

The possibility of the oath being *ἐπίορκος* (“perjured”) is contemplated in the oath sacrifices of both Book 3 and Book 19, but the precise meaning of the term is different in each case. This difference raises the larger question of the meaning of *ἐπίορκος* and its cognates in Homer and other Greek authors, and it is to this question that we now turn.

2. *The Definition of Perjury*

According to contemporary law as practiced in the United States, perjury involves the making of false statements or the giving of false testimony, under oath, in a judicial or quasi-judicial proceeding. A person who knowingly makes false assertions under oath in regard

¹⁸ I have adapted the translation of D. A. Campbell, *Greek Lyric* (5 vols.; LCL; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982–93), 1:299. See also frgs. 298; 306; 429.

¹⁹ E. Bickermann, “Couper une alliance,” *Archives d'Histoire du Droit Orientale* 5 (1951): 133–56.

²⁰ W. Burkert, *Homo Necans: The Anthropology of Ancient Greek Sacrificial Ritual and Myth* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 35.

²¹ On this scene, see now D. F. Wilson, *Ransom, Revenge, and Heroic Identity in the Iliad* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 116–20, who argues that Achilles does not accept Agamemnon’s gifts because they are not offered as reparations for harm gratuitously inflicted. Although Achilles returns to the battlefield to exact revenge for Patroclus’ death, his oath is not one of fidelity to Agamemnon.

to material matters of fact is liable to a charge of perjury.²² To commit perjury, in short, is to swear falsely.²³

The ancient definition of perjury is broader than its modern counterpart. To understand it, one must first recall that the standard Greek term for perjury is ἐπιρκία. Although this word does not occur in Homer, two of its cognates do. They are ἐπιρκέω and ἐπίρκος, both of which appear for the first time in the *Iliad*, as does the standard Greek word for oath, ὅρκος. Etymologically, the Greek term for perjurer (ἐπίρκος) is almost certainly a composite of ἐπί and ὅρκος.²⁴

The latter is, of course, the standard word for “oath,” and ancient writers, including Homer, apply it to a wide variety of oaths.²⁵ It is used, for example, of the two basic types of oath from a chronological standpoint, viz., the assertory oath and the promissory oath. As is well-known, assertory oaths pertain to the past and present, and they contain an assertion about what has happened or not happened, or about what is true or not true. Promissory oaths, on the other hand, pertain to the future and contain a promise that binds the oath-taker either to do something or to refrain from doing something.

It is important to observe that ancient authors use the term ἐπιρκία and its cognates to refer to both assertory and promissory oaths.

²² In some instances, perjury could also involve willfully false assertions “as to a matter of . . . opinion, belief, or knowledge” (Zelin, “Perjury,” 1067).

²³ Scheib, “U.S. Law,” 140–41; Perkins and Boyce, *Criminal Law*, 510–21; Zelin, “Perjury,” 1067–68; Nolan and Nolan-Haley, *Black’s Law Dictionary*, 1139.

²⁴ E. Hoenigswald, “Ἐπίρκος,” *Studi Italiani di Filologia Classica* 14 (1937): 83–87, thinks otherwise; he derives ἐπίρκος from a postulated verb *ἐπι—έρκειν. To my knowledge, his hypothesis has not been adopted by subsequent scholarship. For suggestions about the etymological meaning of ἐπίρκος, see esp. W. Luther, “Wahrheit” und “Lüge” im ältesten Griechentum (Borna-Leipzig: Noske, 1935), 90–97, and *Weltansicht und Geistesleben* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1954), 86–88; R. Strömberg, *Greek Prefix Studies on the Use of Adjective Particles* (Göteborgs Högskolas Årsskrift 52; Göteborg: Wettergren & Kerbers, 1946), 86–88; E. Benveniste, “L’expression du serment dans la Grèce ancienne,” *RHR* 134 (1948): 81–94, and *Indo-European Language and Society* (Miami Linguistics Series 12; Coral Gables, FL: University of Miami Press, 1973), 432–42; M. Leumann, *Homerische Wörter* (Schweizerische Beiträge zur Altertumswissenschaft 3; Basel: Reinhardt, 1950), 79–92; J. Bollack, “Styx et serments,” *REG* 71 (1958): 1–35; R. R. Hiersche, “Note additionnelle relative à l’étymologie d’ὅρκος et d’ὄμνυμι,” *REG* 71 (1958): 35–41; and P. Chantraine, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue grecque* (with a supplement by A. Blanc et al.; Paris: Klincksieck, 1999), 820–21.

²⁵ For an attempt to distinguish between Homeric ὅρκος and ὅρκια, see D. Cohen, “Horkia and Horkos in the *Iliad*,” *Revue internationale des droits de l’Antiquité* 27 (1980): 49–68.

That is, just as ὅρκος is applied to oaths involving the past, present, and future, so also are ἐπιorkía and its cognates. This suggests that the ancient Greek concept of perjury embraces not only “false oaths” about the past and present but also “broken oaths” about the future. Indeed, it is only in the post-Socratic period of philosophy that occasional attempts are made to distinguish linguistically between false and broken oaths.

The application of ὅρκος to both assertory and promissory oaths as well as the wide range of meaning for ἐπιorkía and its cognates can be seen already in Homer’s depiction of the two oath sacrifices mentioned above. The oath that Agamemnon swears about Helen in Book 3 is promissory (281–287; see also 72, 91–93, 253–255), whereas the oath he swears about Briseis in Book 19 is assertory (261–263; see also 9.132–134, 274–276; 19.175–177). The possibility of perjury is raised in regard to both oaths, and it is done so in the invocation.²⁶

Agamemnon begins both oaths by invoking Zeus, Helios (the Sun), Earth, and the subterranean powers of vengeance as witnesses and guardians of the oath. In both cases, it is the subterranean powers that are specifically said to punish the perjurer. The language used to describe the perjurer is the same in both passages. That is, in both the promissory oath of Book 3 and the assertory oath of Book 19, Agamemnon describes the offender as ὅτις κ’ ἐπιorkon ὁμόςσῃ (3.279; 19.260). For Homer, therefore, an individual can commit perjury in regard to both types of oaths.²⁷

The English word “perjury” was once used, like the Greek ἐπιorkos and the Latin *perjurium*, to indicate both false oaths and broken oaths.²⁸ Because the word no longer has this range of meaning for most speakers of modern English, a sensitive translator is almost compelled to use different English terms to render ἐπιorkía and its cognates. In general, one should translate ἐπιorkéin as “to break one’s oath” when the violation of a promissory oath is in view, and one should

²⁶ For other links between Books 3 and 19, see M. Mueller, *The Iliad* (Unwin Critical Library; London: Allen & Unwin, 1984), 158.

²⁷ In the United States, perjury is restricted to assertory oaths, “but in some European law systems the willful violation of a promissory oath is treated as perjury” (M. Herron, “Perjury,” *New Catholic Encyclopedia* (15 vols.; New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967), 11:140.

²⁸ J. A. Simpson and E. S. C. Weiner, “Perjury,” *The Oxford English Dictionary* (2nd ed; 20 vols.; Oxford: Clarendon, 1989), 11:570–71.

render it “to swear falsely” or “to commit perjury” when there is falsification of an assertory oath. A translator who followed this principle would translate Agamemnon’s description of the offender as “whoever breaks his oath” in 3.279 and as “whoever swears falsely” or “whoever commits perjury” in 19.260.²⁹

Another crucial difference between the Homeric definition of perjury and the modern one has to do with the criterion of materiality. In the United States, materiality is an essential element in the definition of perjury. To constitute perjury, the false testimony must be given on a matter material to the judicial proceeding.³⁰ Materiality is a key concept, for it provides an important basis for narrowing the definition and application of the offense. The materiality requirement, by contrast, does not appear in Homer, so that the application of the offense is extremely broad in contrast to current practice.

3. *Perjury and the Issue of Intentionality*

In contemporary United States law, intentionality is a central and indispensable consideration in deciding whether someone is guilty of perjury. To be guilty of the modern crime, one must give false testimony both knowingly and willfully. This point is made emphatic by E. M. Scheib in his discussion of perjury:

The act must be willful, that is, it must be a deliberate, intentional act. While statutes in various jurisdictions state that the act must be done “knowingly” or “corruptly” or “fraudulently,” it is clear that what is required is a criminal intent, a knowledge of the falsity with intention to mislead. The testimony or statement must be false. It must be known by the person making the statement to be false or at least believed by him not to be true, whether in fact it is true or not. A false statement made through ignorance of the truth, or through honest mistake, or through recklessness, is not perjurious if given with an honest belief in its truth.³¹

²⁹ Ancient philosophers, who were well aware of the two-fold meaning of *ἐπιορκία* and its cognates, tried to solve the problem linguistically by coining new terms and by restricting the semantic range of this old word-complex for perjury. See Plescia, *Oath and Perjury*, 84–85.

³⁰ Scheib, “U.S. Law,” 141; Perkins and Boyce, *Criminal Law*, 512; Zelin, “Perjury,” 1067; Nolan and Nolan-Haley, *Black’s Law Dictionary*, 1139.

³¹ Scheib, “U.S. Law,” 141.

When one turns from the modern understanding of perjury to the Homeric concept of ἐπιρκία, the difference is striking. Homer's concept can be seen most clearly in the so-called Doloneia of Book 10.³² In this section of the *Iliad*, Dolon, the only son of the herald Eumedes, responds to Hector's call for a volunteer to find out whether the Achaean ships are still being closely guarded (10.299–312). Dolon is willing to go on this dangerous mission, but he insists that the chariot and horses promised by Hector as a reward be those that belong to Achilles (10.313–327). Hector accepts Dolon's condition, lifts up his staff, and swears the following oath: "Let Zeus, loud-thundering lord of Hera, now be my witness himself, that no other man of the Trojans shall mount these horses, since I say they shall be utterly yours, and your glory" (10.328–331).³³

Homer immediately calls Hector's promissory oath ἐπίρκος (10.332). Why? Homer nowhere indicates that Hector is insincere when he swears this oath or has no intention of keeping his word. On the contrary, there is every indication that Hector intends to carry out his oath as soon as the Trojans acquire Achilles' chariot and horses. Hector's oath is ἐπίρκος only because Dolon is subsequently captured and killed, making it impossible for Hector to fulfill his oath. The word ἐπίρκος is, in fact, Homer's first clue that Dolon's mission will not be successful; he makes this hint explicit a few lines later when he says that Dolon will not return from the ships to bring news to Hector (10.336–337).

³² For the purposes of this essay, I am treating "Homer" as the composer of the entire *Iliad*. In so doing, I am essentially bracketing the so-called "Homeric Question" and not entering into the debate about the single or multiple authorship of the *Iliad* or the possibility that some sections of the poem are post-Homeric interpolations (see the treatments by F. Turner, "The Homeric Question," in *A New Companion to Homer*, ed. by I. Morris and B. Powell [Mnemosyne 163; Leiden: Brill, 1997], 123–45, and R. Fowler, "The Homeric Question," in *The Cambridge Companion to Homer* [ed. R. Fowler; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004], 220–32). The Doloneia is widely viewed as an example of the latter; see M. Bowra, "Composition," in *A Companion to Homer* (ed. A. J. B. Wace and F. H. Stubbings; London: Macmillan, 1962), 38–74, esp. 46; G. S. Kirk, *The Songs of Homer* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962), 168, 208–9, 212, 310–12, 324, 350, 352; C. H. Whitman, *Homer and the Heroic Tradition* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1958; rep. New York: Norton, 1965), 283–84; Mueller, *The Iliad*, 175–76; and B. Hainsworth, *The Iliad: A Commentary: Books 9–12* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993) 151–55, with further bibliography. Yet the validity of the observations about the concept of perjury found in the *Iliad* is not fundamentally affected by one's position on this issue.

³³ The translation is that of R. Lattimore, *The Iliad of Homer* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1951), 227.

Ἐπίορκος is usually rendered "false oath," but, in the case of 10.332, translators typically choose another rendering in order to avoid giving the impression that Hector has lied. Murray chooses "idle oath," Liddell-Scott-Jones and Lang-Leaf-Myers suggest "bootless oath," Lombardo uses "empty oath," and R. Fitzgerald and Fagles both opt for "swore in vain." Similarly, Rouse renders it with "This oath was never kept," and Rieu paraphrases it with "Later events gave a twist that he had not expected to this promise of Hector's."³⁴ From Homer's perspective, however, Hector's oath is still "false." It is so, not because the great Trojan hero is guilty of intentional prevarication, but because his oath is not proved true by subsequent events.³⁵

This example makes clear that Homer does not consider a speaker's intention to be a necessary criterion in determining whether an oath is ἐπίορκος. "In primitive thought, it is not sufficient to intend to fulfill the terms of an oath. One must in fact keep it."³⁶ The decisive criterion for Homer is objective rather than subjective. A true oath is one that is objectively true, whether made about the past, present, or future. Similarly, a false oath is one that is objectively false. It apparently does not matter to him whether the oath contains an assertion about the past or present, or whether, like Hector's oath, it contains a promise about the future. If the sworn statement is not objectively true, or is not proved true by subsequent events, the oath is ἐπίορκος.³⁷ Homer thus stands in radical contrast on this point to

³⁴ A. T. Murray, *Homer: The Iliad* (LCL; 2 vols.; London: Heinemann, 1924–25), 1:461; LSJ 649; A. Lang, W. Leaf, and E. Myers, *The Complete Works of Homer: The Iliad* (New York: The Modern Library, 1929; rep. 1950), 177 (the rendering of Book 10 is that of Lang); S. Lombardo, *Homer: The Iliad* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1997), 190; R. Fitzgerald, *The Iliad* (Garden City: Anchor/Doubleday, 1974), 239; R. Fagles, *Homer: The Iliad* (New York: Penguin, 1990), 287; W. H. D. Rouse, *Homer: The Iliad* (New York: The New American Library, 1938; rep. 1954), 121; E. V. Rieu, *Homer: The Iliad* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1950; rep. Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1966), 189.

³⁵ Leaf, *Iliad*, 1:448; Willcock, *Iliad*, 1:290–91. See also C. Callaway, "Perjury and the Unsworn Oath," *TAPA* 123 (1993): 15–25, who tries to avoid the conclusion that Hector is guilty of perjury yet recognizes the difficulty: "Homer does not seem to be taking into consideration the intention of a character swearing an oath: a perjurer is the person who swears a false proposition, whether its outcome is beyond his control or not" (19).

³⁶ A. W. H. Adkins, *Merit and Responsibility: A Study in Greek Values* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1960), 216 n. 11.

³⁷ See also Latte, "Meineid," 346; Luther, "Wahrheit," 95–97, and *Weltansicht*, 85–105; and Plescia, *Oath and Perjury*, 83–85.

both Herodotus and Aristotle. The former has the oracle at Delphi tell Glaucus that even the intention of committing perjury is as wrong as actually doing it (*Hist.* 6.86), and the latter distinguishes between intentionally swearing a false assertory oath and breaking a promissory oath (frg. 143 Rose).

The absence of intentionality from Homer's understanding of perjury coincides with the fact that "early Greek justice cared nothing for intent."³⁸ Indeed, even in the case of homicide—a frequent phenomenon in Homer's poems—no consideration is given to the circumstances under which the killings take place nor is there is ever any distinction made between voluntary and involuntary homicide.³⁹ Consequently, Homer's view of perjury may be surprising to the modern reader, but it is consistent with the general early Greek disregard for intentionality.⁴⁰

Homeric ἐπιρκία, therefore, includes both subjectively and objectively false oaths. For Homer, an oath is perjured when it is broken, whether voluntarily or involuntarily. Hector's unfulfilled—and unfulfillable—oath to Dolon is an obvious example of the latter,⁴¹ and the Trojans' refusal to return Helen as well as the breach of the truce by the Trojan bowman Pandarus are, at least in Homer's eyes, important instances of the former.⁴² Agamemnon and the

³⁸ E. R. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1951), 3; see also p. 35. I leave aside here the debate about Autolycus, the grandfather of Odysseus, who is described as surpassing all others "in thievery and the oath" (*Ody.* 19.396). Some have viewed "oath" here as equivalent to "false oath" and thus to "perjury," whereas others have argued that it refers to Autolycus' skill in framing his oaths in such an ambiguous way that he intentionally deceives his opponents but does not actually commit perjury.

³⁹ G. M. Calhoun, *The Growth of Criminal Law in Ancient Greece* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1927), 16–17; R. J. Bonner and G. Smith, *The Administration of Justice from Homer to Aristotle* (2 vols.; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1930–38; rep. New York: Greenwood, 1968), 1:21, 33–34, 53; A. W. H. Adkins, *Moral Values and Political Behaviour in Ancient Greece* (New York: Norton, 1972), 91.

⁴⁰ See esp. Adkins, *Merit and Responsibility*, 46–48, 63, and *Moral Values*, 8, 13, 19. For an important qualification in regard to Homer's minimization of intentionality, see A. A. Long, "Morals and Values in Homer," *JHS* 90 (1970): 121–39, esp. 124 n. 9.

⁴¹ Because of the involuntary nature of Hector's broken oath, C. F. von Nögelsbach, *Homerische Theologie* (ed. G. Autenreich; 3rd ed.; Nürenberg: C. Geiger, 1884), 219, rejects it as a clear example of Homeric perjury. By using the modern criterion of intentionality as his standard, Nögelsbach fails to see that Homer's own understanding of perjury lacks this criterion.

⁴² It is not that the Trojans are devious when they take the oath (though Agamemnon implies that they were [4.168]). Rather, it is their stubborn refusal to

Achaecans certainly regard the resumption of hostilities as a deliberate breach of the Trojans' oath, and they accuse the Trojans of both deceit (ἀπάτης: 4.168) and fabrication (ψεύδεσι: 4.235). By having Antenor, Priam's chief counselor, concede that the Trojans have proved false (ψευσάμενοι) to their oaths of fidelity (7.351–752), Homer shows that he concurs with the Achaeans' opinion that Menelaus' victory fulfills the essential condition of the oath and, consequently, that the Trojans are guilty of perjury. Indeed, for Homer, the breach of the treaty is more than just an unkept pledge. It is a betrayal of the friendship (φιλότητα) created by the oath ceremony (3.73, 94, 256, 323) and a repudiation of the trust implied by the shaking of hands (4.159; see also Euripides, *Med.* 21–22).⁴³

Confirmation of the view that Homer's definition of perjury does not entail intentionality is provided by Hesiod. In both the *Theogony* (232) and the *Works and Days* (282), Hesiod must add the adverb "willfully" (ἐκόν) to the phrase "swear a false oath" in order to indicate that the oath-taker is deliberately stating a falsehood. In the latter passage, moreover, he contrasts the intentional perjurer with the "true-sworn" (εὐόρκου) man who "is willing to say what he knows (γινώσκων) to be just" (*Op.* 280–285).⁴⁴ Hesiod's addition of terms indicating volition and knowledge shows that the term ἐπίορκος by itself does not yet necessarily involve intentional falsification. By adding such qualifiers, Hesiod makes clear that he is condemning voluntary perjury, not the involuntary kind of perjury committed by Hector. Intentional perjury, in the eyes of both Homer and Hesiod, merits severe punishment.⁴⁵

comply with the terms of the oath—their failure to return Helen and their resumption of hostilities—that makes them guilty of intentional perjury. I use the qualifying phrase "at least in Homer's eyes" because Homeric scholars debate whether the resumption of hostilities by the Trojans is *in fact* a breach of their compact with the Achaeans; see, for example, the comments of Kirk, *Books 1–4*, 306, 309, 330, and *The Iliad: A Commentary: Books 5–8* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 244. Homer's depiction of Pandarus, at any rate, is not only thoroughly negative (Willcock, *Iliad*, 1:233–34) but also thematically problematic; for a brief discussion of the thematic difficulties and a possible explanation, see Mueller, *Iliad*, 169–70.

⁴³ See also *Ody.* 24.546, where the conflict on Ithaca is brought to an end by ὄρκια. For the debate about the original meaning of the term "friend" (φίλος) and the concept of friendship in Homer and other early Greek authors, see J. T. Fitzgerald, "Friendship in the Greek World Prior to Aristotle," in *Greco-Roman Perspectives on Friendship* (ed. J. T. Fitzgerald; SBLRBS 34; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997), 13–34.

⁴⁴ The translation is that of M. L. West, *Hesiod: Theogony and Works and Days* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 45.

4. *The Punishment of Perjury*

In the United States today, perjury is a crime in every state as well as a federal offense. Furthermore, it is governed by statutes, not by common law. Individuals suspected of perjury (or subornation of perjury) may be charged with the commission of a criminal act and prosecuted by the state. If convicted, they will be punished by the state, within the limits of the law. In short, perjury today is essentially a matter of criminal law, not civil law. Indeed, as M. J. Mullaney, Jr., notes, "Civil liability for perjury is rare."⁴⁶ Only in exceptional cases may an injured party take civil action against a perjurer.⁴⁷

The contemporary treatment of perjurers is quite different from that practiced in early Greece, at least as far as that practice and its understanding are reflected and refracted by Homer.⁴⁸ Basic to this difference is the fact that perjury for Homer is a religious offense, not a legal one. This difference is important for the debate about the relationship of religion and law in antiquity. It is usually asserted that early Greek law was strongly religious,⁴⁹ but a number of recent scholars, especially Michael Gagarin, argue that Homer reflects a "rather clear separation between religion and law."⁵⁰ The early Greek treatment of perjury does not settle this debate, for the relationship of religion and law in ancient Greece is complex.⁵¹ Nevertheless, the Greeks' treatment of perjury as a religious offense lends support to Gagarin's thesis.

⁴⁵ Two other conspicuous instances of broken oaths in Homer include the oath of Odysseus' companions not to eat Helios' cattle (*Od.* 12.298–365) and the oath of the Phoenician sailors to take Eumaeus' childhood nurse safely home (*Od.* 15.435–438, 478–481). The latter case is similar to that of Hector's oath to Dolon, in that the nurse's death prevents the fulfillment of the oath. The former case involves an intentional breach of the oath, though attempts are made to avoid the consequences of the breach.

⁴⁶ M. J. Mullaney, Jr., "U.S. Law of Oaths and Affirmations," *New Catholic Encyclopedia* (15 vols.; New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967), 10:599–600, esp. 600.

⁴⁷ Zelin, "Perjury," 1147–49.

⁴⁸ A discussion of the complex relationship between Homeric epic and Homeric society falls far beyond the scope of this essay. For an orientation to the latter, see K. Raafaub, "Homeric Society," in *A New Companion to Homer* (ed. I. Morris and B. Powell; Mnemosyne 163; Leiden: Brill, 1997), 624–48.

⁴⁹ See, e.g., K. Latte, *Heiliges Recht* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1920), and Gernet, *Anthropology*, 143–276.

⁵⁰ M. Gagarin, *Early Greek Law* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 15.

⁵¹ R. Garner, *Law and Society in Classical Athens* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987), 31–57.

Because perjury for Homer is a religious rather than a legal offense, the party responsible for punishing the perjurer is not the court. That is, whereas perjury today is an actionable offense that is punished by the judiciary, ancient perjurers were punished above all by the divine.⁵² To be more precise, the actual agency of punishment in ancient Greece may be divine or human, but the source of the punishment is understood to be divine. Contemporary citizens of the United States may swear “to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help me God,” but God, at least according to modern law, has nothing to do with the actual penalty assigned the perjurer by the court. Theists, of course, may see in the court’s punishment some kind of divine action or they may posit an additional penalty administered by the divine. But this is the perspective of theology, not that of modern law.⁵³

Because the punishment of perjurers by the divine is a complicated topic that entails a variety of issues, it is neither possible nor desirable to discuss the matter here in detail. Fortunately, for the purposes of this essay, a brief summary of three of the major points can suffice.

First, the divine’s role as punisher of perjurers is grounded in the invocation of the gods that is an explicit or implicit part of the oath. The gods serve as both witnesses and guardians of the oath, and it is their responsibility to ensure that the oaths are true and trustworthy (*Il.* 3.280).⁵⁴ Perjurers, by swearing what is false and failing

⁵² For a general treatment of norms and sanctions in Homer, see esp. E. Cantarella, *Norma e sanzione in Omero* (Milan: Giuffrè, 1979), and L. Muellner, *The Anger of Achilles: Mēnis in Greek Epic* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996). According to many historians of Greek religion, such as Nilsson, *Geschichte*, 1:139–42, the gods originally have nothing to do with oaths and their infraction. According to this view, the oath originates in pre-deistic times and works by means of sympathetic magic, so that the curses attached to the oath become operative in and of themselves when the oath is broken. By the time of Homer, however, the oath is intimately connected with the gods, and it is this connection that is discussed in the current study.

⁵³ In the treatment that follows, I limit the discussion to the punishment of human perjurers. For perjury by the divine and its punishment, see Homer, *Il.* 15.40; *Homeric Hymn to Hermes* 4.274–276, 383–384, and Hesiod, *Theog.* 793–805. For the argument that neither Hera nor Hermes is guilty of perjury because “each offered to swear an oath but did not in fact swear it,” see Callaway, “Perjury and the Unsworn Oath,” esp. 24.

⁵⁴ For a different view, see Bollack, “Styx,” 15, who attempts unsuccessfully to separate the invocation of the gods from the punishment of perjury. This is not persuasive, for both perjury and its punishment are mentioned in two invocations (*Il.* 3.278–279; 19.259–260). Furthermore, the invoked gods are not just witnesses

to perform what they have promised under oath to do, sin both before and against the gods (19.188, 264–265). In so doing, they offend the gods and take their names in vain.

Second, the gods' punishment of perjurers is a response to this abuse of their name and reputation. For the gods, perjury is primarily a matter of personal injury. Their honor (τιμή) and credibility are at stake, and they punish perjurers in retaliation. They act for the sake of their honor, both because it has been disregarded and diminished and in order to restore and maintain it. The perjurer's fundamental failing is not the fact of lying, but the wrongful use of the gods' names.⁵⁵

The punishment of the perjurer is, therefore, completely different from that meted out by a modern court of law. "Punishment, in fact, as we know it, does not exist in Homeric society."⁵⁶ The perjurer is punished, but the punishment is not intended to be the means whereby the offender is morally reformed or pays a debt to society. Nor is justice for the injured human party the chief concern of the punishing god. The injured human party, to be sure, may derive some kind of emotional satisfaction or material benefit from the deity's action. But human justice is the consequence of the god's act of retaliation, not its primary motivating factor. Zeus is typical in this regard. "His concern to punish offenders against justice originates from the concern to punish offenders against his particular *timē* [honor]" and "that is felt by any god."⁵⁷ "When the gods punish perjury," therefore, "it is as a direct offence against themselves, a breach of contract rather than of morals."⁵⁸

to the oath but also its guardians, and that role is also mentioned explicitly in the invocation of *Il.* 3.280. Thus Janko, *Books 13–16*, 194, is correct when he says, "To take an oath is in effect to invoke powers greater than oneself to uphold the truth of a declaration, by putting a curse upon oneself if it is false." See also note 60 below.

⁵⁵ Adkins, *Merit and Responsibility*, 63, and Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational*, 32, 52 n. 18; see also K. J. Dover, *Greek Popular Morality in the Time of Plato and Aristotle* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), 247–49.

⁵⁶ Adkins, *Moral Values*, 15.

⁵⁷ H. Lloyd-Jones, *The Justice of Zeus* (Sather Classical Lectures 41; 2nd ed.; Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 27.

⁵⁸ G. M. Calhoun, "Polity and Society: The Homeric Picture," in *A Companion to Homer* (ed. A. J. B. Wace and F. H. Stubbings; London: Macmillan, 1962), 431–52, esp. 449. See also E. Rohde, *Psyche: The Cult of Souls and Belief in Immortality among the Greeks* (London: Routledge & Kegan, 1925), 42. For a different perspective in regard to Zeus, which links his punishment of perjurers with his role as guardian

Third, in the *Iliad* different deities are said to punish perjurers. Zeus (3.320–323), the “gods” (19.264–265), and the Erinyes (19.259–260) are mentioned by name, and Hades and Persephone are probably implied (by the dual in 3.279). As the latter two subterranean deities suggest, the punishment of the perjurer may even take place after death (3.278). This suggests the severity of the crime in the Homeric world. Post-mortem punishment is mentioned only once in the entire *Iliad*, and the crime that merits it is perjury (3.278–279). Like Tityus, Tantalus, and Sisyphus (*Od.* 11.576–600), perjurers may pay dearly for their abuse of the gods.⁵⁹

Naturally, individuals whose interests were adversely affected by false or broken oaths could at all times resort to the expedient of self-help and take direct action against the perjurer. In such cases, the divine’s punishment of the perjurer could be seen as part of the human action or separate from it.⁶⁰ In later Greek history, false testimony in court eventually became subject to prosecution and to human punishment.⁶¹ Even then, however, the ancient situation was

of morality, see Nilsson, *Geschichte*, 1:421. In my judgment, this link is secondary rather than primary.

⁵⁹ M. van der Valk, *Researches on the Text and Scholia of the Iliad* (2 vols.; Leiden: Brill, 1963–64), 2:62. The modern punishment of crime differs from that inflicted by the ancient Greeks in other important ways. For example, nowadays it is only the guilty party who is punished for an offense. In the ancient Mediterranean world, on the other hand, punishment was not always restricted to the actual offender. It could be extended to include the offender’s family and friends (see, e.g., the story of Achan in Joshua 7). This is particularly true of the punishment for perjury in early Greek thought. It could be restricted to the guilty party, extended to include the individual’s family and associates, or deferred so that it would fall upon the perjurer’s descendants. In the *Iliad*, for example, both the post-mortem punishment of the individual perjurer (3.278–279) as well as the punishment of the perjurer’s whole family is contemplated (3.298–301; 4.155–168, 235–239, 269–271). On the ideas of postponed punishment and inherited family guilt in archaic Greek thought, see esp. R. Parker, *Miasma: Pollution and Purification in Early Greek Religion* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1983), 198–206.

⁶⁰ Plescia, *Oath and Perjury*, 4, wrongly contends that the ancient Greeks conceived of the deity as the mere witness of the oath and not also as the avenger of perjury (see also note 54 above). As a result, he erroneously makes vengeance the sole responsibility of the wronged party. Divine punishment never excluded the possibility of personal vengeance, and the latter could be seen as the vehicle of the former. Such was the case with the Achaeans’ sack of Troy. For the coordination of divine and human punishment in the classical period, see Dover, *Greek Popular Morality*, 259, and also Rohde, *Psyche*, 212 n. 156.

⁶¹ A. R. W. Harrison, *The Law of Athens* (2 vols.; Oxford: Clarendon, 1968–71), 2:192–97. According to Aristotle (*Pol.* 1274b.5–7), the first Greek lawgiver to make the giving of false testimony an actionable offense was Charondas of Catana, who is usually dated to the sixth century B.C.E.

quite different from the modern one. In Attic law of the fourth century B.C.E., for example, false witnesses were subject to prosecution, but the action was civil rather than criminal, and prosecutions were much more frequent than today.⁶² Even here, however, the real offense was the giving of false testimony, not perjury *per se*, for even an unsworn witness was subject to this action.⁶³ These differences are important, but they belong to a later period in the history of perjury and call for separate discussion.

Conclusion

In the present essay I have concentrated upon Homer and his period, comparing and contrasting his view of perjury with that found in the current law of the United States. As we have seen, Homer's concept of perjury has a strongly religious dimension; the modern legal understanding, by contrast, is thoroughly secular. Specific differences exist in four essential matters: *Sitz im Leben*, definition, the issue of intentionality, and punishment. These differences not only demonstrate the need for care in the treatment of ancient authors but also suggest that a comprehensive history of perjury would help clarify the manner in which we arrived at our modern understanding of this term. Such a history will need to be the work of several scholars with differing areas of expertise, and this brief study will have served one of its purposes if it prompts new and more thorough examinations of this neglected topic.⁶⁴

⁶² G. M. Calhoun, "Perjury Before Athenian Arbitrators," *CP* 10 (1915): 1-7, "ΕΠΙΣΚΗΨΙΣ and the ΔΙΚΗ ΨΕΥΔΟΜΑΤΥΠΙΟΝ," *CP* 11 (1916): 365-94, and *Growth of Criminal Law*, 117 n. 33.

⁶³ Latte, "Meineid," 349.

⁶⁴ For comments on previous drafts of this essay, I wish to thank Margaret C. Foster, Daniel L. Pals, Jonathan L. Ready, Marvin A. Sweeney, and Steven L. Winter.

THE KINGDOM OF THE FATHER IN THE GOSPEL OF THOMAS

Hans Kvalbein

There is a broad consensus among biblical scholars that the kingdom of God is the most basic and central topic in the message of Jesus in the synoptic gospels. In this article I want to take a look at the meaning of this concept in the Gospel of Thomas, where many of the sayings refer to “the kingdom.” The central position of this term and theme is one of the many facts that give the Gospel of Thomas a closer relationship to the synoptic gospels than any other of the books from Nag Hammadi.

In the Gospel of Thomas, however, we do not find the most common synoptic phrase “kingdom of God.” Most frequently it is referred to simply as “the kingdom.”¹ This kind of language seems to presuppose that the author has received it as a well-known concept that does not need any further explanation to the readers. Three times we find the form “kingdom of heaven,” six times the form “kingdom of the Father” and once “kingdom of my Father.”² I do not want to discuss possible nuances between these phrases and the corresponding expressions in the synoptic gospels, “kingdom of God” and “kingdom of heaven.” I take them to be basically synonymous in their meaning. Neither do I want to enter into a diachronic discussion of the origin of and the possible interdependence between the sayings of Jesus as they are given in the canonical gospels and in the Gospel of Thomas. As far as I make comparisons between the gospels, the purpose is to clarify the meaning and function of “the kingdom” in the Gospel of Thomas on a synchronic level.

¹ 12 times, in the logia GTh 3 (2x), 22 (3x), 27, 46, 49, 82, 107, 109, 113. My references to the Gospel of Thomas in this article are based on the translation of H.-G. Bethge in *The Fifth Gospel: The Gospel of Thomas Comes of Age* (ed. S. J. Patterson, J. M. Robinson and H.-G. Bethge; Harrisburg: Trinity Press International 1998). This translation is identical with the English version in K. Aland, *Synopsis Quattuor Evangeliorum* (Editio quindecima revisa; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft 2001).

² Kingdom of heaven: GTh 20, 54, 114; kingdom of the Father: GTh 57, 76, 96, 97, 98, 113; kingdom of my Father: GTh 99. A couple of these occurrences (GTh 22, 97) are not in the Coptic text but are added by the translators.

It is a pleasure and an honour to dedicate this study to a Norwegian-American scholar, David E. Aune, who has devoted himself to meticulous and ground-breaking studies of the primary sources in the "Umfeld" and made them fruitful for the understanding of the New Testament. Following his call to go *ad fontes*, I write this article for a colleague whose friendship and scholarship I appreciate so much.

1. *Scholarly Questions Regarding the Kingdom of God*

When a biblical scholar comes from the synoptic gospels to other sources in order to look at the "kingdom of God," two main questions will be ringing in his or her ears. The first one has made headlines in NT scholarship for more than a century and can be called the *temporal* question: Is the kingdom in the teaching of Jesus referring to a present or to a future reality, or eventually to both? In general, one can say that the futuristic, eschatological view had its break-through at the previous turn of century, as the "Religionsgeschichtliche Schule" saw the message of Jesus as part of or as influenced by contemporary apocalyptic ideas. For a long time there was a broad consensus that Jesus proclaimed a basically future, eschatological kingdom which was at the same time somehow present in his own ministry. But recently a number of scholars have tried to renew a non-apocalyptic understanding of Jesus and his message of the kingdom. The Gospel of Thomas has played an important role in these attempts. J. D. Crossan has coined the expression sapiential kingdom as alternative to the "eschatological kingdom," and may be mentioned as a representative of this trend among North American scholars.³

The second question has not made headlines in the same way, but has regularly been raised and should not be declared settled in spite of many declarations to the opposite.⁴ I would call it the *semantic* question of the *meaning* of the phrase: Is the βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ a

³ J. D. Crossan, *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant* (San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1991), 287.

⁴ J. Jeremias, *Neutestamentliche Theologie, erster Teil: Die Verkündigung Jesu* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus Gerd Mohn, 1971), 101ff.; G. Beasley-Murray, *Jesus and the Kingdom of God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, Exeter: Paternoster, 1986), 74; G. E. Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1974; new edition by Don Hagner 1993), 74.

spatial concept, referring to a “kingdom” as an area or domain with some kind of borders, or is it referring to an activity or a status, the “rule” or “reign” of God as king of his people and of his creation? In the first case, the genitive could be taken as a genitive of possession or of origin, in the latter case it would be a subjective genitive. The English word “building” has the same kind of double meaning: it can have a concrete meaning and refer to “something built” with roof and walls, or it may refer to the “act of building” a house, a boat, a community or whatever may be the object for the verb “build.” The two meanings are closely related, but a trained user of the English language will easily be able to distinguish between them by hearing or reading the word in context. A book on “church building” will probably have a different content from a book on “church buildings.” From the former one expects something about the activity of “building” a church as a community; from the latter one expects a presentation of concrete church buildings.

In a similar way the meaning of βασιλεία should be interpreted from its actual use in different contexts. The dominant trend in NT scholarship has been to interpret it as a *nomen actionis* from the verb βασιλεύω, “being a king” or “acting as a king.” In scholarly literature there is a tendency to replace the rendering “kingdom of God” in the editions of the Bible with the “reign” or “rule” of God, and in German it seems that “Reich Gottes” as the traditional translation is rejected for the benefit of “Gottesherrschaft.” This “verbal” meaning is given to the phrase in Bauer/Danker’s well-known dictionary.⁵ The prominent linguists Louw and Nida declare this to be the only possible understanding of the phrase:

It is generally a serious mistake to translate the phrase βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ ‘the kingdom of God’ as referring to a particular area in which God rules. The meaning of this phrase in the NT involves not a particular place or special period of time but the fact of ruling. An expression such as ‘to enter the kingdom of God’ thus does not refer to ‘going to heaven’ but should be understood as ‘accepting God’s rule’ or ‘welcoming God to rule over.’⁶

⁵ F. W. Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature* (BDAG) (3rd ed.; Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2000), s.v., puts the phrases βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ and βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν under the main heading “the act of ruling” and with the proposed translation “the royal reign” of God, in accordance with its German predecessors.

⁶ J. P. Louw and E. A. Nida, eds., *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains* (vol. 1; New York: United Bible Societies, 1988), 480.

I have in other contributions argued that the interpretation described in this quotation as a “serious mistake” may indeed be the best starting point for the interpretation of the βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ both in the synoptic gospels⁷ and in the Gospel of John.⁸ A growing number of scholars have admitted that the concrete meaning fits best with the context in the sayings of Jesus,⁹ or at least should be seen as an important aspect of the concept in the gospels.¹⁰ There is no reason to replace the well-established translation “kingdom of God” with a *nomen actionis* like “rule” or “reign of God” in presentations of the message of Jesus.

With these temporal and semantic questions in mind I approach the concept of “kingdom” in the Gospel of Thomas. I want to look at the word in its syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations within the Gospel seen as a whole.¹¹ J. Liebenberg has in a fruitful way brought the metaphor theories of Lakoff, Johnsen and Turner into the discussion of the language of the kingdom.¹² Their understanding of

⁷ H. Kvalbein, “The Kingdom of God in the Ethics of Jesus,” *Communio Viatorum* 40 (1998): 197–227.

⁸ H. Kvalbein, “The Kingdom of God and the Kingship of Christ in the Fourth Gospel,” in *Neotestamentica et Philonica: Studies in Honor of Peder Borgen* (ed. D. E. Aune, T. Seland, J. H. Ulrichsen; Leiden: Brill 2003), 217–232.

⁹ H. Conzelmann summarized already in his *Grundriss der Theologie des Neuen Testaments* (München: Kaiser, 1968), 126: “Man kann die Faustregel aufstellen: Im Judentum bedeutet der Ausdruck: den Akt des Herrschens Gottes; Bei Jesus: Gottes Reich.” This interpretation had formerly been argued by S. Aalen, ‘Reign’ and ‘House’ in the Kingdom of God in the Gospels,” *NTS* 8 (1962): 215–240. Independently it was maintained by O. Neill, “The Kingdom of God,” *NovT* 34 (1993): 130–141.

¹⁰ Ben Witherington III, *The Christology of Jesus* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990), 192–198 concludes that the spatial or local meaning of the phrase cannot be overlooked. He suggests a translation “dominion of God” in order to combine the two meanings “reign” and “kingdom.” E. P. Sanders, *The Historical Figure of Jesus* (London: Penguin, 1993), 171–175 categorizes the use of the phrase under six headings, and in four of them he uses the expression “realm” to describe the meaning of βασιλεία. J. Liebenberg, *The Language of the Kingdom and Jesus: Parable, Aphorism, and Metaphor in the Sayings Material Common to the Synoptic Tradition and the Gospel of Thomas* (BZNW 102; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2001) speaks about the kingdom in concrete terms as “possession” and “location.” J. D. G. Dunn, *Jesus Remembered* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 388 accepts the spatial meaning in important phrases like “entering”, “reclining at a table,” and being “great” in the kingdom.

¹¹ See the section on the semantics of words in W. Egger, *How to Read the New Testament: An Introduction to Linguistic and Historical-Critical Methodology* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1996), 101–111.

¹² Liebenberg refers especially to G. Lakoff and M. Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980) and to G. Lakoff and M. Turner, *More Than Cool Reason: A Field Guide to Poetic Metaphor* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1989).

“conventional metaphors” or “root metaphors” shaping our language as well as our thinking can help us to see some patterns in the kingdom language and to map the images behind the actual expressions or syntagms. These can eventually be confirmed or modified by looking paradigmatically at possible synonyms or antonyms.

2. *The Kingdom as “Coming” in the Future or as Present*

Expressions with the βασιλεία as subject for verbs for “coming” play a prominent part in the synoptic gospels, and the syntagm ἤγγικεν ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ, “the kingdom of God has come near,” can serve as a summary of the message of Jesus in Mark and Matthew, as well as in Luke. “Your kingdom come” is part of the Lord’s Prayer and confirms the central position of the idea of a “coming” kingdom in the early Church. We do not find parallels to these expressions in ancient Jewish literature. They seem to be peculiar to the synoptic gospels and the early Church.

On this background it is quite striking that we do not find this expression in the Gospel of Thomas except in one text, and there apparently denying that the kingdom will “come” in the future:

His disciples said to him: “The kingdom—on what day will it come?”

“It will not come by watching (and waiting for) it. They will not say: ‘Look, here!’ or ‘Look, there!’ Rather, the kingdom of the Father is spread out upon the earth, and people do not see it.” (GTh 113)

The “disciples” here express an expectation of a “coming” kingdom in the future. Jesus’ answer seems to be a correction of this expectation, replacing the question of “when” with a question of “where”: the kingdom is present, and it is spread out upon the earth. But this kingdom is hidden: “people do not see it.” Is this word about its presence a flat denial of the future coming of the kingdom? Since no other texts in the Gospel of Thomas talk explicitly about a “coming kingdom,” we have to look at other texts with similar expressions and ideas. The first kingdom saying in the beginning of the gospel clearly points in the direction of such a denial, with its polemical tone against “those who lead you” and its stress on the kingdom as present reality:

Jesus says: “If those who lead you say to you: ‘Look, the kingdom is in the sky!’ then the birds of the sky will precede you.

If they say to you: 'It is in the sea,' then the fishes will precede you. Rather, the kingdom is inside of you and outside of you"

"When you come to know yourselves, then you will be known, and you will realize that you are the children of the living Father.

But if you do not come to know yourselves, then you exist in poverty and you are poverty." (GTh 3)

This saying is not occupied by the "when" question, but corrects a false concept of "where" the kingdom is. I do not know any sources connecting the "kingdom of God" with the sea, even if there are many gods in the ancient world who are linked both to the sea and to heaven. The idea of a kingdom in the sky or in the sea should probably not be taken as a reliable description of the opponents' view, but as a mocking parody of their concept of the kingdom. I would guess that the location of the kingdom in "the sky" in this polemical context is a reference to heaven as God's dwelling place. We now know from the Sabbath Songs in Qumran that kingdom language could be pointing to the heavenly temple or throne room of God as the place for the eternal worship of him.¹³ In the NT we find expressions pointing to an idea of the kingdom of God as present with God now but waiting to be revealed or to "come" in the future.¹⁴ The polemic of GTh 3 could then be directed against an idea of a heavenly kingdom which is also a coming kingdom, attested in other early Christian sources.

The positive statement "the kingdom is inside of you and outside of you" has a close resemblance to Luke 17:21: "The kingdom is inside you" or "in the midst among you." But in Luke this statement is immediately followed up by a teaching on the future where the "days of the Son of man" are compared to the "days of Noah." The crisis of the end time is described as similar to the vision of the future in Luke 21. The coming tribulations are signs that "the kingdom of God is near" and that the "redemption" comes when

¹³ A. M. Schwemer, "Gott als König und seine Königsherrschaft in den Sabbatliedern aus Qumran," in *Königsherrschaft Gottes und himmlischer Kult* (ed. M. Hengel and A. M. Schwemer (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1991), 45–118.

¹⁴ Matt 25:34: "the kingdom that has been prepared for you from the foundation of the world". . . . Rev 21:2: "I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride. . . ." The Matthean expression "kingdom of heaven" may also have kept a connotation to "heaven" as the place of origin for the coming kingdom, as indicated G. Dalman, *The Words of Jesus Considered in the Light of Post-Biblical Jewish Writings and the Aramaic Language* (English edition by D. M. Kay; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1909).

the Son of man appears (Luke 21:25–31). The idea of the presence of the kingdom “among you” in Luke 17:21 does not exclude that the near context supports an eager expectation of a coming kingdom.

In the Gospel of Thomas, however, we find no sayings about a future kingdom. If we look for possible synonyms to the “kingdom” in connection with the verb “come,” the three sayings GTh 49–51 may help us. GTh 49 speaks about coming from the “kingdom” and returning to it, and GTh 50 about coming from the “light.” The sign of the living Father among them is declared to be “movement and repose.” The last word, rendered with the Greek term *ἀνάπαυσις*, is repeated with the same term in the next saying:

His disciples said to him: “When will the repose (*ἀνάπαυσις*) of the dead take place, and when will the new world come?”

He said to them: “That (the Coptic fem. refers to *ἀνάπαυσις*) which you are awaiting has (already) come, but you do not recognize it.” (GTh 51)

In these three logia there seems to be a close relationship between the “kingdom,” the “light” and “movement and repose” as expressions for the reality of salvation which is present in a hidden way. The kingdom and the light is the place where you come from and return to. In GTh 51 there is an awkward connection between *ἀνάπαυσις* and “the dead” which has led translators to take it as a scribal error influenced by the last word in GTh 50 and to emend it into *ἀνάστασις*, “resurrection,” which is more easily connected with the “dead.” In this case the Jesus of Thomas explicitly supports the view which is rejected in 2 Tim 2:18: that the resurrection of the dead has already come. The “repose” is, however, also found in GTh 60 and 90 and seems to be a central word for salvation in the Gospel of Thomas, so I do not think an emendation is necessary.¹⁵ In any case Jesus is here correcting the eschatological view of the disciples: that this “repose” (or “resurrection”) should be expected only in the future.

This is made clear by the synonymous parallelism in the question of the disciples. The *ἀνάπαυσις* is an equivalent to the “new world.” This is a Jewish-apocalyptic concept which already Gustaf Dalman saw as the closest parallel to the “kingdom of God” in the message

¹⁵ This emendation is the preferred text of Aland’s *Synopsis* and that of Patterson, Robinson, and Bethge, but it is not supported in NHL, Giversen, Frid, and Svartvik.

of Jesus. He pointed to the fact that most syntagms or word-connections containing the phrase βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ in the gospels correspond closely to the use of “the coming world” or “the life in the world to come” in rabbinic literature.¹⁶ In Matt 19:28 we find “the new world” in an apocalyptic context as description of the time of judgement and salvation, with “eternal life” (19:16,29) and “the kingdom of God” (19:23,24) as synonymous expressions in the near context. As in GTh 113 we may therefore read the question of the disciples in GTh 51 as expressions of the eschatological thinking the Gospel of Thomas wants to refute. In Thomas, Jesus gives no room for a coming kingdom, a “new world” or a “repose of the dead” only in the future.¹⁷ The verb “come” is the same in GTh 113 and in 51, and in both cases the denial of a future “coming” of the kingdom or of the repose/resurrection is followed by a word of the hidden nature of its presence: “you do not recognize it” (51), “people do not see it” (113).

The only place in the Gospel of Thomas with a possible reference to a “coming” day of judgement is in the parable of the weeds in GTh 57: “For on the day of the harvest the darnel will be apparent and it will be pulled up and burned.” In the apocalyptic language of the synoptic gospels and the book of Revelation the “day of harvest” is a traditional metaphor for the coming judgement of God, and we are easily tempted to read GTh 57 in the light of its parallel in Matt 13. But from the clear denials of a future kingdom, and of a “new world” or a coming repose/resurrection in GTh 113 and 51, I think Liebenberg is right in his suggestion that the eschatological aspect of the parable in GTh 57 has no weight in the

¹⁶ Dalman, 135, states, “The parallels adduced from above from the Jewish literature have proved that the true affinity of the idea of the sovereignty of God, as taught by Jesus, is to be found, not so much in the Jewish conception of the *malikut šamajim* as in the idea of the ‘future age’ (*haolam habbah*), or that of the ‘life of the future age’ (*chajje olam habbah*). This conception is among the Jews, in a similar way, a comprehensive term for the blessings of salvation, just as the ‘sovereignty of God’ is with Jesus; and, further, the ‘sovereignty of God’ is for Jesus invariably an eschatological entity, of which a present can be predicted only because ‘the end’ is already approaching.”

¹⁷ The opening sentence of the Dialogue of the Savior has a similar declaration of the presence of the salvation as rest: “Already the time has come, brothers, that we should leave behind our labor and stand in the rest; for he who stands in the rest will rest forever.”

Gospel of Thomas.¹⁸ Here the parable of the weeds serves to confirm the community in their knowledge of their origin from God as their Father, in spite of their knowledge that other people, the outsiders, have their origin from his enemy.

As a conclusion we may say that there is no positive evidence for a concept of a “coming” kingdom in the Gospel of Thomas. On the contrary, there are sayings with a clear denial of a future, eschatological kingdom.¹⁹ The kingdom of the Father in this gospel is only a present reality, hidden for the eyes of those who have not found it. If this gospel had a normative and correcting function in a community praying the Lord’s Prayer, they probably had to give the second petition “Your kingdom come” some kind of non-eschatological interpretation.

The meaning of the word “kingdom” in this syntagm cannot be decided with certainty. Connected with the verb “come” it might be conceived as a *nomen actionis* and point to a time when the Father will rule as king. But it might as well be read as a *concretum* and point to a time when his kingdom of salvation is established. When the question of “when comes” in the Gospel of Thomas is replaced by the question of “where is” the meaning is definitely turned in a more concrete, spatial direction. We come back to this in the next section when we discuss the kingdom as “location.”

3. Who Will “Enter” the Kingdom: The Kingdom as Location

We have already referred to expressions in GTh 49 that have no equivalents in the synoptic gospels: “coming from” and “returning to” the kingdom. The knowledge of this is the privilege of the “solitary ones,” rendered with the Greek word *μοναχός*. This word is not

¹⁸ Liebenberg, *The Language of the Kingdom*, 222: “It would appear that, since there is actually no ‘theology’ in Thomas about the day of judgement, that it might just mean that the parable actually delays the judgement of the ‘darnel’ almost indefinitely. The ‘day of judgement’ then becomes nothing more than a rhetorical device which the parable uses to urge people to ensure that they are identifiable as originating with God. This would be one explanation for the fact that Thomas talks about the ‘day of judgement’ only here and nowhere else in the Gospel.”

¹⁹ Liebenberg, *The Language of the Kingdom*, 457: “However, from the gospel as a whole it is clear that Thomas has an extremely negative view of any attempts to locate the Kingdom of God/heaven/Father in the future.”

found in the New Testament, but it is used, together with “the elect,” in the early monastic movement and in ascetic and Gnostic circles.²⁰

Jesus says: “Blessed are the solitary ones, the elect. For you will find the kingdom. For you come from it (and) will return to it.” (GTh 49)

The spatial connotations of the “kingdom” in syntagms like these are evident. The ideas of “coming from” or “returning to” the kingdom cannot easily be connected with the idea of God’s “rule,” as if the believer were outside it in his or her present life. The verbs normally refer to a movement from one place to another, and this is confirmed in the following saying 50 where coming from “the kingdom” is replaced by coming from “the light.” In Gnostic thinking the light is the sphere of the divine as opposed to the material world in darkness. As long as you live in the body, the presence of this divine reality is hidden. But it is the origin and the destination of your life.²¹ The ascetic people of Thomas have “found” this reality and know from where they come and where they go. The “kingdom” is a designation for this location of light: it is their origin and their destination. Behind these expressions we hear the conventional metaphor of life as a journey.²²

In other sayings we find a syntagm with which we are familiar from the synoptic gospels: “enter the kingdom (of God/of heaven).” In the synoptic gospels this syntagm refers to the kingdom as a future, eschatological reality. In the Gospel of Thomas this is no probable interpretation, since this gospel so clearly denies the idea of a “coming” kingdom, as we have seen. Let us again look at the texts. Three sayings are concerned with the question of who shall “enter the kingdom”:

Jesus saw infants being suckled.

He said to his disciples: “These little ones being suckled are like those who enter the kingdom.”

²⁰ S. Giversen, *Thomasévangeliets: Indledning, oversættelse og kommentarer* (København: Gad, 1959), 92, finds this language in the 4th and 5th century. He also points to the use of these terms in another text from Nag Hammadi, *The Dialogue of the Savior* 120,23–26; 121,17–25 and to the similarity of ideas between GTh 49 and the Valentinian Gnosis as expressed in the Gospel of Truth 22,13–15.

²¹ B. F. Miller, “A Study of the Theme of ‘Kingdom’: The Gospel according to Thomas: Logion 18,” *NovT* 50: shows convincingly from GTh 18 the close connection between “seeing the kingdom” and knowing one’s origin (ἀρχή) and destination.

²² Liebenberg, *The Language of the Kingdom*, 113–121.

They said to him: "Then will we enter the kingdom as little ones?"

Jesus said to them: "When you make the two into one and when you make the inside like the outside and the outside like the inside and the above like the below—that is, to make the male and the female into a single one, so that the male will not be male and the female will not be female—and when you make eyes instead of an eye and a hand instead of a hand and a foot instead of a foot, and image instead of an image, then you will enter [the kingdom]." (GTh 22)

The disciples said to him: "Your brothers and your mother are standing outside."

He said to them: "Those here, who do the will of my Father, they are my brothers and my mother. They are the ones who will enter the kingdom of my Father." (GTh 99)

Simon Peter said to them: "Let Mary go away from us, for women are not worthy of life."

Jesus said: "Look, I will draw her in so as to make her male, so that she too may become a living male spirit, similar to you."

(But I say to you): "Every woman who makes herself male will enter the kingdom of heaven." (GTh 114)

These sayings have some common features. In form they are not isolated sayings of Jesus, but dialogues with indications of a situation where his words were spoken. They are also formulated as "entrance requirements" describing the persons who are allowed to "enter" the kingdom. These features give the sayings a close formal similarity to the synoptic gospels.²³ Doing the "will of my Father" (GTh 99) as entrance requirement is also close in content to synoptic texts like Matt 5:20 and Mark 3:31–35.

But the conditions for entering the kingdom in GTh 22 and 114 are in their content very different from the synoptic texts. An aspect of being a child or being among the "little ones" in the enigmatic saying of GTh 22 is the cessation of sexual differentiation in male and female. The child or the babe seems to be an image of a human being not yet destroyed by sexuality. The condition for entering the kingdom is to be some kind of unisex person. This is similar to and at the same time different from GTh 114, which is one of the most discussed sayings in the Gospel of Thomas. The negative view of

²³ "Entrance requirements" or "Einlass-sprüche" was coined as a term for these synoptic sayings by H. Windisch, "Die Sprüche vom Eingehen in das Reich Gottes," *ZNW* 27 (1928): 163–192. A recent discussion of these texts is given by F. W. Horn, "Die synoptischen Einlasssprüche" *ZNW* 87 (1996): 187–203.

women expressed by Peter in this logion has hardly any parallel in ancient Christian sources. The Jesus of Thomas, however, does not exclude women from being “worthy of life” or from “entering the kingdom.” He will “make her male,” so that she too may become “a living male spirit.” The last expression seems to be an echo of Gen 2:7, where the man is created before the woman: God breathes his spirit into him and makes him a living being. From this background the saying could mean that the woman as the second sex should somehow return to the man and become a man as the original spiritual being. The conception in GTh 114 is different from GTh 22, but both sayings seem to maintain an ideal of returning to a kind of primordial state or an angel-like existence with no sexuality. Overcoming the separation of the sexes seems to be an important theme in many of the writings from Nag Hammadi, e.g. in the Gospel of Philip, which follows after the Gospel of Thomas in the second codex. This gospel is concerned with the “bridal chamber” as a kind of Gnostic sacrament, and this enigmatic concept is also used once in the Gospel of Thomas: “Many are standing before the door, but it is the solitary ones who will enter the bridal chamber” (GTh 75).

What does it mean to “enter the kingdom” in a gospel with no future eschatology? The answer lies probably in the role of knowledge in the Gospel of Thomas and in the “Gnostic” tradition as a whole. In GTh 3 the word about the kingdom “inside you and outside you” is immediately followed by a word about knowing yourself. The expression “keys of knowledge” in GTh 39 shows that knowledge can be conceived as a “room” you can enter. The spatial aspect of this expression is clear: knowledge “opens up” and makes you an insider, lack of knowledge “shuts you out” from the area of knowledge. The saying is a warning directed against the Pharisees and the scribes. They have received the keys, but instead of using them to “enter” and to allow others to “enter,” they have hidden the keys. The saying is a clear parallel in form and content to Matt 23:13, which is directed against the same two groups with the same accusation, but with the expression “shut the kingdom of heaven” instead of “hiding the keys of knowledge.” In the Gospel of Matthew the attitude of the Pharisees and the scribes is put in contrast to the position of Peter, who receives the “keys of the kingdom of heaven” (16:19). But in Thomas the image or “conventional metaphor” of “life is a journey” has no connotations to the idea of a future escha-

tological fulfilment. To “enter the kingdom” is in Thomas a present reality and means to receive the saving knowledge about your origin and destination. The “keys of knowledge” can “open up” the hidden words by which human beings will not “taste death” (GTh 1).

The concept of the kingdom as a location in connection with the verb “enter” is confirmed by the equivalent expression “enter the places of my Father” in the conclusion of the parable of the great banquet in GTh 64. The Greek loan word τόπος is here used for the kingdom as place of salvation. In GTh 4 we find the expression “place (τόπος) of life” in the same function as “places of my Father,” and in GTh 60 the disciples are encouraged to “look for a place for your repose.” Here the word τόπος is combined with another Greek loan word, ἀνάπαυσις, “repose,” which we already have found in GTh 51 as an expression equivalent to “kingdom” for the presence of salvation. In GTh 24 the disciples want to be instructed about the τόπος where Jesus is, so that they can seek it. The word evidently does not refer to the physical location where he is when they speak with him, but refers metaphorically to the world of light to which Jesus points in his answer and which is the contrast to darkness.²⁴

That Jesus himself can be seen as the “place” of the kingdom may be deduced from another saying, which was known from Origen and Didymos of Alexandria before the Gospel of Thomas was found:

Jesus says: “The person who is near me is near the fire.

And the person who is far from me is far from the kingdom.”
(GTh 82)

This logion confirms the clear spatial connotations of the concept of the kingdom. Being “near the kingdom” can be added to the syntagms of “come from,” “return to” and “entering” the kingdom as expressions implying the concept of the kingdom as a location, in addition to the use of τόπος, place, as an equivalent word for the place of salvation.

²⁴ Miller, 58, reads logion 24 together with logion 77, where Jesus says: “I am the light that is over all. I am the All. The All came forth out of me. And to me the All has come.” She finds a similarity between these sayings and the Poimandres myth as we find it in the Hermetic writings. “Jesus and the Kingdom are identical with the Light,” and man’s true origin is in the Light. When a man finds his true origin, he will have found the τόπος of Life, the kingdom from where he came and where he returns.

4. *To Whom Does It Belong? The Kingdom as Possession and Treasure*

To whom does the kingdom belong? In some remarkable texts in the synoptic gospels this question is raised and answered. The Sermon on the Mount starts with a declaration that the kingdom of heaven belongs to “the poor in spirit” (Matt 5:3), and the Sermon on the Plain opens with a similar beatitude of “the poor” to whom the kingdom of God belongs (Luke 6:20). These sayings are both followed up by a series of eight or three other beatitudes, and in Luke also by a contrasting group of four woes. This gives them a context facilitating their interpretation. The kingdom is here seen as a (possible) possession of human beings, expressed by a genitive construction, it is “theirs,” it is “yours” (αὐτῶν ἔστιν, ὑμετέρα ἔστιν). The same use of genitive we find in the saying about those who are like children τοιοῦτων ἔστιν ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ (Mark 10:14 and parallels): the kingdom “belongs to such ones.”

The idea of the kingdom as a possession finds another expression in Jesus’ promise to the disciples that their Father will “give” the kingdom to the “little flock” (Luke 12:32) and in his solemn declaration of his will in his farewell speech in Luke 22:28: “And I confer on you a kingdom, just as my Father conferred one on me.” The Greek verb διατίθεμαι here corresponds to the testament situation where a property or inheritance is transferred to new owners. The inheritance is in the following sentence explained as a partaking in the eschatological banquet and as a position as judges in the age of fulfilment. Similar connotations of the kingdom as possession are present in the syntagm “inherit the kingdom” (Matt 25:34), which is the most frequent kingdom-syntagm in the Pauline letters (1Cor 6:9; 15:50; Gal 5:21; Eph 5:5; see also Jas 2:5). All these sayings, in the synoptic gospels as well as in the letters, refer to the future eschatological kingdom, and the βασιλεία cannot in these connections be taken as a *nomen actionis* about God as king, but must refer to the concrete area or gift of salvation.

In the previous section we have seen that the Gospel of Thomas has a parallel to the saying about being like a child, but the promise is there not expressed in terms of “ownership” to the kingdom, but as “entering” it (GTh 22). Only one saying in Thomas expresses the relationship of human beings to the kingdom with a genitive in terms of ownership, and this saying is clearly a parallel to the first beatitude in Matthew’s Sermon on the Mount and Luke’s Sermon on the Field:

Jesus says: "Blessed are the poor. For the kingdom of heaven belongs to you." (GTh 54)

J. Liebenberg has convincingly shown the differences between the three beatitudes declaring the poor to be blessed.²⁵ They are all based on the conventional metaphor "the Kingdom of God is a possession." The beatitude in Q/Luke refers to poor people in a material and economic sense. This is not seen as an ideal situation or as a result of their own choice, but as a state of deficiency conferred upon them. Their comfort is not wealth in a material or economic sense, but they have a "possession" of another, higher order, the kingdom of God, implying a future, eschatological reversal of their present poor condition. The beatitude in Matthew, however, concerns the "poor in spirit" and should not be interpreted in a material sense, but in an ethical direction. Their situation is not an involuntary lack of possessions, but a non-material quality by choice. On the basis of this quality they are promised a possession of a higher order: the kingdom of heaven. The eschatological character of the kingdom is made clear by the future forms in the following beatitudes in Matthew as well as in Luke.

In Thomas the form "poor" without "in spirit" and the address in the second person plural seem to link the saying GTh 54 closer to Luke than to Matthew. But Thomas supports an ascetic ideal, where poverty is not a circumstance beyond one's control, but a voluntary way of living. As in Matthew, poverty is referring to an ideal, not to a deficiency, and to be "poor" has an inherent positive ethical value. Even if "poor" in Thomas refers to economic poverty as in Luke, the meaning of the saying as a whole may therefore in this ascetic context come closer to the beatitude in Matthew. But Thomas differs from both of them when we read his concept of the kingdom in his context. He has no futuristic view of the kingdom. The possession of the kingdom must in Thomas be interpreted in terms of a present knowledge. The poor who have renounced the world know their origin and destination, as expressed in the related beatitude of the solitary ones: "Blessed are the solitary ones, the elect. For you will find the kingdom. For you come from it (and) will return to it" (GTh 49). The poor of the beatitude in GTh 54 are the solitary ones who have left the material desires of this world.

²⁵ Liebenberg, *The Language of the Kingdom*, 448–461.

Here we find the “kingdom” as object to a verb “find,” a syntagm which is absent from the synoptic gospels. But it is easy to associate such an expression with the kingdom parables of a man finding a treasure or a pearl.²⁶ The basic metaphor “the kingdom is a treasure” can be seen as a variation of “the kingdom is a possession.” The idea of seeking and finding a treasure leads to “ownership” of what you have found. Another saying in Thomas speaks about “finding” the kingdom in a form close to the sentences we have looked at in the previous section as “entrance requirements” giving conditions for “entering” the kingdom:

“If you do not abstain from the world, you will not find the kingdom.
If you do not make the Sabbath into a Sabbath, you will not see the Father.” (GTh 27)

The two sentences form a parallelism, and the first of them confirm the impression of the Gospel of Thomas as standing in an ascetic tradition with a negative view of the world. Many sayings point in this direction. “Whoever has come to know the world has found the (dead) body. But whoever has found the (dead) body, of him the world is not worthy” (GTh 80). Almost identical is another saying: “Whoever has come to know the world has found a corpse. And whoever has found this corpse, of him the world is not worthy.” (GTh 56). The material world has no real value. The ideal is not to get rich in this world, but to renounce it (GTh 110). To “find” the kingdom in GTh 27 means on the background of such a view to acquire an insight into the emptiness of the material world and to respond adequately to it: to fast or to abstain from the world. The “Sabbath” in the second sentence is not easy to interpret. If the Sabbath here is an equivalent to the “repose” as expression for the present salvation, the saying as a whole may be pointing to a dualistic, encratic piety whose highest ideal is meditation and withdrawal from the world. In this saying we also observe that the expression “to find the kingdom” is equivalent to “see the Father” in a similar way to Matt 5:3 and 8, where possession of the kingdom is parallel to “seeing God.”

Closely related to the expression “to find the kingdom” are the syntagms of “seeing the kingdom” (GTh 113) and “knowing the kingdom” (GTh 46). Both of them should in Thomas be connected with

²⁶ Matt 13:44–46; GTh 109; 76: Matthew and Thomas both have the verb “find” in both parables.

the concept of the kingdom as a present knowledge, which is hidden from the outsiders. The verbs “find” and “know” are not used with the kingdom as object in the synoptic gospels, and this language is another indication of the importance of the esoteric knowledge announced in the opening sayings of the Gospel of Thomas. The gospel as a whole is presented as the “hidden words” of the living Jesus, and “whoever finds the meaning of these words will not taste death” (GTh 1). The point is to seek and to find and become king (2), to see that the kingdom is already here, inside of you and outside of you, and to leave the poverty of this world by knowing yourself (3). Jesus has been the vehicle of this knowledge of the kingdom and has thereby inaugurated the new era after John the Baptist. Now the “little ones” can “enter the kingdom” (GTh 22) by their knowledge:

Jesus says: “From Adam to John the Baptist, among those born of women there is no one who surpasses John the Baptist so that his (i.e. John’s) eyes need not be downcast.

But I have (also) said: ‘Whoever among you becomes little will know the kingdom and will surpass John.’” (GTh 46)

To whom does the kingdom belong? Both the synoptic gospels and the Gospel of Thomas utilize the conventional metaphor “the kingdom is a possession” or “the kingdom is a treasure.” The meaning of βασιλεία in such contexts is “kingdom,” not “reign.”

In the synoptic gospels the corresponding expressions refer to the future, eschatological kingdom. It belongs to the poor or the “poor in spirit” and to those who are like children, designations describing in different ways what it means to be a disciple. The kingdom is a gift promised to the disciples, but also intended to be proclaimed to Israel as a whole and to the Gentiles. This is indicated by the mission speeches in Matt 10 and Luke 10.

In Thomas the kingdom is not connected with a future hope, but with the life-giving insight shared by an ascetic community which has withdrawn from the world. The kingdom belongs to the poor and the solitary, those who have seen their origin in the light and have come to know the world as a corpse. How far they want to share this knowledge with outsiders is not clear from the content of the Gospel of Thomas. But many of the sayings sound like appeals to the hearers to “hear” and to “see” and to “know” and to join the “little ones” who shall enter the kingdom.²⁷ A withdrawal from

²⁷ Liebenberg, *The Language of the Kingdom*, 222, n. 191, points to the fact “that

the world does not necessarily exclude a sense of having a mission to the world and a desire to rescue other souls into the realm of light so that they may find their true origin and their destination.

5. *To What Can It Be Compared? The Kingdom Explained in Parables*

Many sayings about the kingdom in the Gospel of Thomas have the form of parables. Five of them are introduced with the formula "The kingdom of the Father is like . . ." (57, 76, 96, 97, 98) and two with the shorter formula "the kingdom is like . . ." (107, 109). No one of these has any indication of the situation into which they were spoken. They all start only with the brief standard formula "Jesus says." The parable of the mustard seed is different in that it starts with a question from the disciples: "Tell us whom the kingdom of heaven is like!" (GTh 20). But even this introduction gives no hint about the direction of interpretation.

Liebenberg has shown how difficult it is to interpret parables when they are isolated from a narrative context and only delivered as a collection of words of wisdom. I cannot here enter any broad discussion of their meaning in the context of Thomas' conceptual world as a whole, but only refer to Liebenberg's comprehensive study and point to some characteristic features in the presentation of the kingdom theme in some of the parables.

We have already referred to the parable of the weeds in GTh 57 and how it can be interpreted in a quite different way in its new context compared to the eschatological application of the same story in Matt 13.²⁸ It is an appeal to the listeners to know their origin with the Father as his good seed and not to bother with those others who do not share this knowledge and thus have their origin with "the enemy."

Liebenberg has given a similar non-eschatological interpretation of Thomas' version of the parable of the hidden treasure and proposes to call it a "pedagogical" metaphor.²⁹

almost all of the sayings which talk about finding (searching for) the kingdom, are formulated as conditional statements which put the act of finding as something which still has to take place. (GTh 2; 22; 24; 27; 38; 39 etc.)."

²⁸ See note 17.

²⁹ Liebenberg, *The Language of the Kingdom*, 242.

Jesus says: "The kingdom is like a person who has a hidden treasure in his field, [of which] he knows nothing. And [after] he had died, he left it to his [son]. (But) the son did not know (about it either). He took over that field (and) sold [it]. And the one who had bought it came, and while he was ploughing [he found] the treasure. He began to lend money at interest to whom he wished." (GTh 109)

When we compare this text with the parable of the treasure in the field in Matt 13:44 there are at least five striking differences in the Thomas version. 1) There are three persons involved, not only one. 2) The ignorance of the treasure by the two first owners, father and son, is expressly stated. 3) The third person is ploughing, and he finds the treasure by this work in the field. He has no need to hide it again and buy the field, as in Matthew, because he has already bought it. 4) The happy man finding the treasure in Thomas has therefore no need to "sell all he had" in order to acquire it. 5) At the end he starts his own business: the treasure is evidently big enough to let him lend to people at interest.

The parable seems to be built on the contrast between the two persons who do not "know" about the treasure and the third person who "finds" it. We have seen that both these verbs "know" and "find" in the Gospel of Thomas can be connected with the "kingdom" as object. There can be no doubt that the kingdom here is compared to the hidden treasure, and that the hearer is encouraged to "know" where it is and to "find" it. This interpretation is supported by the saying GTh 108 just before this parable: "Whoever will drink from my mouth will become like me. I myself will become he and what is hidden will be revealed to him." Jesus is here the source of true wisdom, revealing to his disciples what has been hidden to them. This idea corresponds also with the very opening words of the Gospel of Thomas, presenting the gospel as a whole as the "hidden words" from the living Jesus, whose meaning the hearer should "find" (GTh 1). This is followed by sayings encouraging the hearer to "seek" and not give up seeking until he "finds" (GTh 2) and to understand the presence of the kingdom and to "know yourselves" (GTh 3). There is no problem in reading this parable in a pattern of metaphors like "the kingdom is a treasure" and "knowledge is a hidden treasure." With two persons as negative examples and one as positive, as in the parable of the good Samaritan Luke 10:25-37, it can serve both as a warning not to fail the decisive knowledge and as an encouragement to find it.

This invites us also to read “ploughing” in a metaphoric sense about the (hard) work which may be necessary to discover the true knowledge (GTh 2). The last sentence about the new status of the lucky finder as money-lender can be a problem, since GTh 95 forbids to lend out at interest and commands to give to people from whom you cannot expect to get anything back. This prohibition should be taken literally as an ideal of an ascetic community with strong negative feelings about business life and piling up wealth.³⁰ But this makes a literal reading of the “lending at interest” at the end of the parable of the hidden treasure highly improbable, and the saying immediately after the parable seems to forbid it: “The one who has found the world and has become wealthy, should renounce the world.” (GTh 110). “Lending money at interest” must from this background be read metaphorically as pointing to the treasure of the kingdom as a new kind of wealth of a different order. We find the same tension in the use of being “poor” as a (voluntary) ideal state in GTh 54 and the metaphorical use of “poverty” as description of a state of deficiency in contrast to the true knowledge in GTh 3. There is no problem in such shift between a positive and negative sense of a word corresponding to a literal or metaphorical application of it. An ascetic worldview turns the normally positive concept of “wealth” into a negative one: worldly wealth should be renounced. The real treasure is the kingdom, and you can increase this true wealth by lending it out at interest.

That the treasure may “grow” by the new business of “lending at interest,” would make the conclusion of this kingdom parable compatible with another one:

Jesus [says]: “The kingdom of the Father is like [a] woman. She took a little bit of yeast. [She] hid it in dough (and) made it into huge loaves of bread. Whoever has ears should hear.” GTh 96

In the context of Thomas the parable of the yeast can be interpreted as a metaphor of the kingdom as the hidden knowledge in a man or a woman who has “drunk from the mouth” of Jesus as the revealer of heavenly wisdom (GTh 108). The appeal to “hear”

³⁰ GTh 64 has a clear conclusion: “Dealers and merchants will not enter the places of my Father.” GTh 63 tells about a rich person who filled his storehouses and devoted his heart to collecting possessions. As the rich farmer in Luke 12:16–21 his life ended in sudden death “in that night.”

at the end of this parable is of course not only a call to physical hearing, but also to understand and keep the spiritual insight. An interpretation in this direction would concur with the parable of the sprouting grain in the Apocryphon of James. The disciples are here worried by a word from Jesus that only few "have found the kingdom of heaven." When Jesus saw that they were distressed, he said to them:

"For this cause I tell you this, that you may know yourselves. For the kingdom of heaven is like an ear of grain after it had sprouted in a field. And when it had ripened, it scattered its fruit and again filled the field with ears for another year. You also: hasten to reap an ear of life for yourselves that you may be filled with the kingdom!" (Apocr. James 11:20–30)

The application at the end of this parable, "that you may be filled with the kingdom," seems to develop metaphorically that the grain scattered its fruit and "filled the field." Like the parable of yeast this is a parable of growth, and the growth is explained in the introduction as a growth in knowledge: "that you may know yourselves" (cf. GTh 3). There seems to be a correspondence between this introduction and the concluding remark: to know yourselves is to "be filled with the kingdom." This syntagm is peculiar for the Apocryphon of James where "fullness" is a condition for entering the kingdom (2:29–40) in a similar way as "knowledge." The word is like a grain of wheat, sprouting and becoming many. "So also can you yourselves receive the kingdom of heaven; unless you receive this through knowledge, you will not be able to find it" (8:16–27). I regard these passages from the Apocryphon of James as relevant for the interpretation of the kingdom parables in Thomas since these two books are the only ones in the Nag Hammadi collection that give the "kingdom" terminology a prominent place and use parables to explain it.³¹

If the parables of the hidden treasure and the yeast in GTh 109 and 96 are about finding the knowledge of the kingdom and giving it "growth," it is easy to interpret another parable in a corresponding way, but in opposite direction. The parable of the woman with the jar of clay seems to be a word of warning. When you have found the kingdom, take heed not to lose it:

³¹ P. Perkins, "The Rejected Jesus and the Kingdom Sayings," *Semeia* 44 (1988): 79–94.

Jesus says: "The kingdom of the [Father] is like a woman who is carrying a [jar] filled with flour. While she was walking on [the] way, very distant (from home), the handle of the jar broke (and) the flour leaked out [on] the path. (But) she did not know (it); she had not noticed a problem. When she reached her house, she put the jar down on the floor (and) found it empty." (GTh 97)

I would see this parable as a contrast to the preceding parable of the yeast. The two women are illustrations to two opposite relations to the kingdom. The woman with the broken jar "did not know" that the flour leaked out. In that respect she is similar to the father and the son who "did not know" about the hidden treasure in their field. The appeal from the parables is clear: Be aware of the kingdom as the hidden treasure and take care that you keep it and let the knowledge of the kingdom grow!³²

In Matt 13:31–33 the parables of the mustard seed and the yeast or leaven are put together and form a pair in a chapter containing other parables of growth. In the Gospel of Thomas they are separated. The parable of the mustard seed (GTh 20) is told after a saying where Jesus invites people to become his disciple and to listen to him. He points to the "five trees in Paradise that do not change during summer (and) winter, and their leaves do not fall. Whoever comes to know them will not taste death" (GTh 19). When we notice the role of "knowledge" both in this close context and its role in the Gospel of Thomas as a whole, I find it probable that the parable of the mustard seed in this gospel is about "growing in kingdom knowledge" in the same way as the parable of the yeast (GTh 96). A detail in the Thomas version which is absent in Matthew can also point in this direction. The growth of the mustard seed comes when it falls on soil "that is cultivated." The growth is not self-evident, but a result of cultivating works. Is this a hint at the attitude of the hearer to the kingdom message? These parables of growth have no eschatological context in the Gospel of Thomas, and this parenthetical appeal gives them an interpretation and application which is markedly different from the corresponding parables in Matthew.

³² The Apocryphon of James has some corresponding parenthetical sentences: "Do not allow the kingdom of heaven to wither; for it is like a palm shoot whose fruit has poured down . . ." (7:22–35) "Do not make the kingdom of heaven a desert within you." (13:18–19). Both of them seem to correspond to a metaphor "the kingdom is a plant" or, perhaps more precisely: "the knowledge of the kingdom is a plant." This metaphor can be developed both in a negative and a positive direction: withering or growth.

The parable of the lost sheep is an interesting example of how a metaphor can change in different contexts and with different wordings. Here already the two synoptic versions vary considerably from each other. In Luke 15 the parable is Jesus' answer to the accusation from the Pharisees and the scribes that he eats with tax collectors and sinners. The good shepherd is no doubt a metaphor for God himself, and his care for the lost sheep corresponds to Jesus' concern for the sinners. In Matthew 18 the parable is part of a teaching on behaviour in the community of the disciples and their concern for the "little ones." The good shepherd is a metaphor for a good disciple or a church leader and his attitude and action when a church member "goes astray" and is in danger to "perish." Both applications can be seen as echoes of the metaphoric language of Ezek 34, where the "shepherds of Israel" are their bad leaders, and the "good shepherd" replacing them is God himself.

The parable of the lost sheep in the Gospel of Thomas seems to have "gone astray" compared to this biblical background:

Jesus says: "The kingdom is like a shepherd who had a hundred sheep. One of them went astray, the largest. He left the ninety-nine, (and) he sought the one until he found it. After he had toiled, he said to the sheep: 'I love you more than the ninety-nine'" (GTh 107)

A striking difference from Luke and Matthew in this story is the information that the lost sheep is the largest, the most valuable. In Ezek 34:16 God's care as the good shepherd is primarily directed to the weak and crippled sheep as a metaphor for those in Israel who were victims of the bad leaders and powerful exploiters. The weak sheep "shall no longer be a prey; I will judge between sheep and sheep" (v. 22). This corresponds in the synoptic gospels to the lost sheep as a metaphor for people in a weak position: the "sinners" in Luke, "the little ones" in Matthew. The information in the Gospel of Thomas that the lost sheep is "the biggest" turns the parable in a quite different direction. It leads us to compare with other parables about people seeking the most valuable. In the close context we find the parable of the hidden treasure (GTh 109), where the point is to know and "find" the kingdom. The parable of the pearl (GTh 76) has a similar structure. A merchant "found" a pearl. The merchant is described as "prudent" because he sold his goods and bought the pearl alone. This is followed up by an application: "You too look for his treasure which does not perish, (and) which stays where no moth can reach it to eat it and no worm destroys

it." The conventional metaphor behind the parable is evidently "the kingdom is a treasure." We could also point to the parable of the fishnet in GTh 8, even if it is not introduced as a kingdom parable. The "sensible" fisherman (corresponding to the "prudent" merchant finding the pearl)³³ "found a large, fine fish. He threw all the little fish back into the sea, (and) he chose the large fish effortlessly." In Thomas this parable has no eschatological flavour and is not pointing to God's action in the great judgement, as the parallel in Matt 13 does. The "big fish" is the great value making all the small fishes valueless. The fisherman is not a metaphor for God as judge, but for a prudent human being giving priority to the kingdom before all other values.

The parable of the lost sheep in Thomas thus seems to fit into a pattern supported by other parables and aphorisms in this gospel. The lost sheep is not a metaphor for people in need of support, but has become the "big sheep" as a metaphor for the kingdom or for the knowledge of the hidden kingdom. And the good shepherd is not a metaphor for God or a caring church leader, but for a human being in general who has the wisdom to find the kingdom and to give it the highest priority. This interpretation gives meaning to the last sentence in the parable, the declaration of the shepherd to the big sheep he had found: "I love you more than the ninety-nine." The value of the kingdom surpasses all other values, like the pearl compared to other merchandise and the big fish compared to the small ones. These parables support the ascetic tendency of the Gospel of Thomas. Does not Jesus say: "Whoever has found himself, of him the world is not worthy" (GTh 111).

The parables in the Gospel of Thomas invite to further research, and I recommend the monograph by Liebenberg for a more extensive study of the kingdom language in these texts compared with the synoptic gospels. For my limited scope it is sufficient to conclude that the kingdom parables confirm the non-eschatological concept of the kingdom which is so characteristic of this gospel. They fit into a pattern of an ascetic, dualistic worldview where the kingdom is

³³ The Coptic text has two different words in the description of the fisherman and the merchant, but the retranslation into Greek in Aland's Synopsis has the same word in GTh 8 and GTh 76: φρόνιμος. This word is used as a loan-word in the Coptic text of GTh 39: "You, however, be as shrewd (φρόνιμος) as serpents and as innocent as doves!" (cf. Matt 10:16).

identified with the liberating knowledge of oneself as part of the spiritual world, from where we come and to where we go. They are based on the basic conventional metaphors of the kingdom as the location of salvation and as the possession and the treasure of the true insight. In this way they confirm the concrete meaning of the word “kingdom” In this gospel the concept of the kingdom can hardly be connected with the idea of the “reign” of the “kingship” of God.³⁴

Conclusion

We have approached the kingdom language in the Gospel of Thomas with two sets of questions, the one relating to the “time” of the kingdom, the other related to the “meaning” of the word as used in its syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations.

We have found that the Gospel of Thomas has no room for an eschatological concept of the kingdom as linked to a fulfilment in the future. On the contrary, there are polemical sayings with a clear refusal of such a view. The kingdom is in Thomas a present reality “inside of you and outside of you.” It is hidden to the outsiders, but the insiders know from where they come and to where they go. The kingdom is the esoteric knowledge of the origin and destination of human beings.³⁵ It is part of a dualistic worldview with a negative attitude to the material world of darkness in contrast to the spiritual realm of light. The kingdom can be experienced any time by those who have seen this world as a corpse and have renounced it. They have found the true treasure in the world of light which is the place of Jesus and of the kingdom. When you have found this reality of a spiritual world, there is no need to expect a “new world” in the future.

³⁴ Liebenberg, *The Language of the Kingdom*, 245, indicates the possibility that this meaning of βασιλεία is active in the introduction to the parables: “can perhaps be said to evoke the conventional metaphor God is a king.” Similarly, Liebenberg, *The Language of the Kingdom*, 216, n. 170. But he has not pointed to any expression or any saying where this metaphor is actively evoked in the Gospel of Thomas.

³⁵ With the words of Betsey Fordyce Miller, 52: “in the Thomas gospel the Kingdom is located neither in time nor in space, but in experience. The New Testament theme of “Kingdom” is spiritualized; the inner man is redeemed by the revelation of hidden knowledge.”

The only syntagm in Thomas which might support a meaning of the word βασιλεία in direction of a *nomen actionis*, standing for God's "reign" or "kingship," is "the kingdom comes." But this syntagm is only used once, in a question from the disciples in GTh 113, and here the Jesus of Thomas explicitly refutes the idea of a coming kingdom.

In all the other syntagms the kingdom has a concrete meaning. The concept of "entering" the kingdom points to the kingdom as a location and this meaning is confirmed by the idea that human beings "come from" and "return to" the kingdom. The function of these syntagms come close the idea of "finding" and "knowing" the kingdom, which may be expressions for the location of the kingdom, but also can be read from the conventional metaphor of the kingdom as a "possession" or a "treasure." These metaphors are developed in many of the parables in Thomas. The metaphor of kingdom as a treasure is used negatively as a warning in the parable of the woman with the broken jar, and positively as encouragement in the parables of the treasure in the field, the pearl, the fishnet and the lost sheep.

The concrete meaning is further supported by the related expressions that can stand as synonyms or antonyms to the "kingdom." The kingdom is the realm of light as the source of life. Human beings come from it and return to it. It is the "repose" for them and "the place of life" so that whoever comes to it may not "taste death." To enter the kingdom corresponds to "entering the places of my Father" described as a great dinner. Many people refuse the invitation to the meal because they are occupied with the business of the world. But this world is in opposition to the kingdom. It is a corpse and has no life in it. Knowledge of the kingdom means to renounce the world, and the "world" may thus be seen as an antonym to the "kingdom." There is no room for a positive evaluation of the material world as God's creation in the Gospel of Thomas.

I find no syntagm and no parallel expressions in Thomas supporting the interpretation of the "kingdom" as referring to the "reign" or "rule" of God. This corresponds to the use of the term βασιλεία τοῦ Θεοῦ in the synoptic gospels. There are no good reasons to change the traditional translation "kingdom of God" or "Reich Gottes" with their concrete connotations to a realm or a location. But there are good reasons to rewrite the articles on the βασιλεία in the lexicons.

PART THREE

REVELATION TO JOHN

THE RELEVANCE OF THE ROMAN IMPERIAL CULT
FOR THE BOOK OF REVELATION:
EXEGETICAL AND HERMENEUTICAL
REFLECTIONS ON THE RELATION BETWEEN
THE SEVEN LETTERS AND THE VISIONARY
MAIN PART OF THE BOOK

Jörg Frey

In his magisterial commentary on Revelation, David E. Aune arrives at a very cautious judgment on the relevance of the Roman imperial cult for the composition of Revelation and its addressees. Commenting on the letter to Pergamon (Rev 2:12–17) where such an impact is often seen quite clearly,¹ he states: “there is no explicit evidence in 2:12–17 (or in Rev 2–3) to suggest that the imperial cult was a major problem for the Christians of Asia or for the author of the final edition of Revelation.”² Even though he provides extensive information on the phenomenon of the emperor cult in Asia Minor, and the Provincial League of Asia³ when commenting on Rev 13, Aune is hesitant regarding the view that the emperor cult was a major problem—or even *the* crucial problem—for the final author or editor and for the communities addressed in the book.

¹ Cf., e.g. H.-J. Klauck, “Das Sendschreiben nach Pergamon und der Kaiserkult in der Johannesoffenbarung,” *Bib* 73 (1992): 153–182; idem, *Alte Welt und neuer Glaube. Beiträge zur Religionsgeschichte, Forschungsgeschichte und Theologie des Neuen Testaments* (NTOA 29; Freiburg Schweiz: Universitätsverlag and Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1994), 115–143. See also C. J. Hemer, *The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia in Their Local Setting*, (new ed., with a foreword by D. E. Aune, Grand Rapids/Cambridge: Eerdmans and Livonia: Dove, 2001), 82–87; H. Giesen, “Das Römische Reich im Spiegel der Johannes-Apokalypse,” *Studien zur Johannesapokalypse* (Stuttgarter Biblische Aufsatzbände 29; Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 2000), 100–213 (129–138); P. Prigent, *Commentary on the Apocalypse of St. John* (trans. Wendy Pradels; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 173: “It is obviously the imperial cult which alone is capable of causing Pergamum to appear as a high place particularly dedicated to this confession of allegiance to political and religious faith which showed such intolerance towards the Christian faith. . . .”

² D. E. Aune, *Revelation* (3 vols.; WBC 52A–C; Dallas: Word Books; Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997–98), 1:183.

³ Aune, *Revelation* 2:773–9.

Such reluctance is quite remarkable, since in an earlier article Aune had collected valuable evidence for the idea that the description of the heavenly worship of the Lamb was largely shaped by the influence of the liturgies and rites of the Roman imperial court ceremonial.⁴ The conclusion stated now appears to be due to the theory of two editorial stages developed in his commentary,⁵ which leads him to see a greater distance between the situation presupposed by the seven letters (belonging to the 'additions' in the final edition) and the background of the imagery used in the visionary main part of the book, where the Roman *imperium* and its cultural and cultic impact is clearly focussed.

In spite of numerous problems posed by the textual and historical data, I would like to suggest that a better case can be made in favour of a more thorough influence of the Roman imperial cult on the argument of the final edition of the book.⁶

⁴ D. E. Aune, "The Influence of Roman Imperial Court Ceremonial on the Apocalypse of John," *BibRes* 28 (1983): 5–26.

⁵ D. E. Aune, *Revelation*, 1:cxii–cxxiv. In "The Influence of Roman Imperial Court," 5, Aune had accepted a Domitianic date of Revelation. In his commentary, he admits that the evidence is ambiguous (*Revelation*, 1:lxix–lxx). On the basis of a theory of two editions, Aune suggests that the final edition might have been completed "toward the end of the reign of Domitian (or, more likely, during the early part of the reign of Trajan)" (*Revelation*, 1:lviii). A date in the time of Trajan was also suggested by J.-W. Taeger, *Johannesapokalypse und johanneischer Kreis* (BZNW 51; Berlin and New York: de Gruyter, 1988), 20–22, and J. Frey, "Erwägungen zum Verhältnis der Johannesapokalypse zu den übrigen Schriften im Corpus Johanneum," in *Die johanneische Frage. Ein Lösungsversuch, mit einem Beitrag zur Apokalypse von Jörg Frey* (M. Hengel; WUNT 67; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1993), 326–429 (411–14 and 427).

⁶ Cf. H. Giesen, "Das Römische Reich im Spiegel der Johannes-Apokalypse"; J. N. Kraybill, *Imperial Cult and Commerce in John's Apocalypse* (JSNTSup 132; Sheffield: JSNT Press, 1996); P. Borgen, "Emperor Worship and Persecution in Philo's In Flaccum and De Legatione ad Gaium and the Revelation of John," *Geschichte—Tradition—Reflexion* (ed. H. Cancik; H. Lichtenberger and P. Schäfer; Festschrift Martin Hengel; vol. 3; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1996), 493–509; St. J. Friesen, "The Cult of the Roman Emperors in Ephesos: Temple Wardens, City Titles, and the Interpretation of the Revelation in John," in *Ephesos—Metropolis of Asia: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Its Archaeology, Religion and culture* (HTS 41; Valley Forge: Trinity, 1996), 229–50; idem, *Imperial Cults and the Apocalypse of John. Reading Revelation in the Ruins* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); G. Biguzzi, "Ephesus, its Artemision, its Temple to the Flavian Emperors, and Idolatry in Revelation," *NovT* 40 (1998): 276–90; Ph. A. Harland, "Honouring the Emperor or Assailing the Beast: Participation in Civic Life among Associations (Jewish, Christian and other) in Asia Minor and the Apocalypse of John," *JSNT* 77 (2000): 99–121; B. J. Lietaert Peerbolte, "To worship the beast. The Revelation of John and the imperial cult in Asia Minor," *Zwischen den Reichen: Neues Testament und Römische Herrschaft* (ed. M. Labahn and

1. *Some Basic Issues regarding the Setting of Revelation*

Of course, not all the related issues can be discussed here. According to the traditional view, Revelation was composed in the later period of Domitian's reign (81–96 C.E.),⁷ during a persecution which was caused—at least partly—by the Christians' refusal to participate in the emperor cult.⁸ Thus, Revelation was seen as a book of comfort for those who were going face martyrdom.⁹ In recent scholarship, this view has been disputed in some major ways:

(a) Historians have corrected the traditional image of Domitian's reign drawn by authors of the post-Flavian period. Most parts of the depiction of Domitian as an evil, cruel or mad ruler were shaped by authors related to the senatorial opposition that imposed a *damnatio memoriae* on Domitian after his death and proclaimed a 'new era' under Trajan.¹⁰ In view of these observations, the evidence for a

J. Zangenberg; TANZ 36; Tübingen and Basel: Francke, 2002), 239–59; D. Pezzoli-Olgati, "Between Fascination and Destruction: Considerations on the Power of the Beast in Rev 13:1–10," *ibid.*, 229–238; H. J. de Jonge, "The Apocalypse of John and the Imperial Cult," in *Kykeon* (ed. H. F. J. Horstmannshoff etc.; Festschrift H. S. Versnel; Religions of the Greco-Roman World 14; Leiden: Brill, 2002), 127–141; K. Cukrowski, "The Influence of the Emperor Cult on the Book of Revelation," *ResQ* 45 (2003): 51–64; S. J. Friesen, "The Beast from the Land: Revelation 13:11–18 and Social Setting," *Reading the Book of Revelation* (ed. D. L. Barr; Resources for Biblical Study 44; Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2004), 49–64.

⁷ Cf., basically, Irenaeus, *Haer.* 5.30.3: "*ad finem Domitiani imperii*"; Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 3.18.3). Cf., on the patristic evidence, Aune, *Revelation* 1:lviii–lx. Certainly, Irenaeus draws on valuable traditions regarding the school of John in Ephesus (cf., on this, B. Mutschler, "Was weiß Irenäus vom Johannesevangelium? Der historische Kontext des Johannesevangeliums aus der Perspektive seiner Rezeption bei Irenäus von Lyon," in *Kontexte des Johannesevangeliums* [ed. J. Frey and U. Schnelle with J. Schlegel; WUNT 175; Tübingen [Mohr Siebeck, 2004], 695–742), but in ascribing Revelation to the same author as the Fourth Gospel, he is certainly wrong. Consequently, his remark on the composition of Revelation is open to criticism.

⁸ Cf., e.g., R. Schütz, *Die Offenbarung des Johannes und Kaiser Domitian* (FRLANT 50; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1933).

⁹ Cf., e.g., W. Bousset, *Die Offenbarung Johannis* (KEK 16; 6th ed.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1906), 137ff.; E. Lohmeyer, *Christuskult und Kaiserkult* (SGV 90; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1919), 34: "... ein greller Widerschein der blutigen Verfolgung, die die Existenz des Christuskultes zur Zeit Domitians in Kleinasien zu vernichten drohte"; idem, *Die Offenbarung des Johannes* (HNT 16; 3rd ed.; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1970), 202; G. Kretschmar, *Die Offenbarung des Johannes. Die Geschichte ihrer Auslegung im 1. Jahrtausend* (Calwer Theologische Monographien B/9; Stuttgart: Calwer, 1985), 26–28.

¹⁰ Cf. the discussion in L. L. Thompson, *The Book of Revelation. Apocalypse and Empire* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1990), 95–115. See also S. J. Friesen, *Imperial Cults and the Apocalypse of John: Reading Revelation in the Ruins* (Oxford: University Press,

persecution of Christians under Domitian¹¹ has become questionable.¹² Persecutions in the period between Nero (C.E. 64) and Decius (C.E. 250) can only be conceived as isolated, local or regional incidents,¹³ not as the result of a general imperial policy towards Christians. It is also a matter of dispute whether the imperial cult was really reinforced under Domitian¹⁴ and what might have been the consequences for Christians in Asia Minor.¹⁵

(b) From the text of Revelation, it is also unclear whether there actually was a persecution of the communities addressed or whether the author or final redactor only expected such an event. While there are many martyrs mentioned in the visions of the book (cf. Rev 6:9; 16:6; 17:6; 18:24; 20:4 etc.), there is only a single martyr referred

2001), 143: "It is now clear that political executions in the imperial center increased late in Domitian's reign, but there is no support for a systematic campaign against Christians in Rome or elsewhere."

¹¹ See already Melito of Sardis (in Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 4.26.9), Hegesippus (*ibid.* 3.17–19) and Tertullian, *Apol.* 5.4. It is remarkable that a persecution under Domitian is not mentioned by Suetonius who notes the persecution of Christians under Nero (Suetonius, *Nero* 16.2), and not even by Irenaeus who was the first to date the composition of Revelation under Domitian's reign.

¹² Cf. J. Ch. Wilson, "The Problem of a Domitianic Date of Revelation," *NTS* 39 (1993): 587–605; J. Ulrich, "Euseb, *HistEccl* III,14–20 und die Frage nach der Christenverfolgung unter Domitian," *ZNW* 87 (1996): 269–89, and P. Hirschberg, *Das eschatologische Israel* (WMANT 84; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1999), 85: "Es gibt keine Belege für eine Christenverfolgung größeren Stils unter dem Prinzipat Domitians." See also the cautious judgment in Aune, *Revelation* 1:lxvii. The monograph by U. Riemer, *Das Tier auf dem Kaiserthron? Eine Untersuchung zur Offenbarung des Johannes als historischer Quelle* (Beiträge zur Altertumskunde 114; Stuttgart and Leipzig: B. G. Teubner, 1998) not only denies any persecution under Domitian but also questions any clear reference to Roman emperors or the emperor cult. According to this author, the challenge for the addressees results only from the pagan cults of the cities. But Riemer's argument is largely implausible and her monograph does not represent the current state of the exegetical discussion (cf. also the criticism in H.-J. Klauck, "Do They Never Come Back? *Nero Redivivus* and the Apocalypse of John," in *Religion und Gesellschaft im frühen Christentum. Neutestamentliche Studien* (WUNT 152; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 268–289 (286 n. 78).

¹³ Cf. Aune, *Revelation*, 1:lxvii.

¹⁴ It is commonly referred to Suetonius, *Dom.* 13.2 where it is said that Domitian had his letters sent out with in the name of *dominus et deus noster* (cf. also Dio Cassius 67.4.7; 67.13.4) and that innumerable statues were erected for him (Pliny the Younger, *Pan.* 52.3; Dio Cassius 67.8.1). But see the cautious remarks in Thompson, *The Book of Revelation*, 104–7. Regarding Revelation, the issue can only be discussed in the context of the situation in Asia Minor. On this, cf. S. J. Friesen, *Imperial Cults and the Revelation of John*, 23–131.

¹⁵ It is hardly correct when B. M. Metzger, *Breaking the Code: Understanding the Book of Revelation* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1993), 16, states: "The first emperor who tried to compel Christians to participate in Caesar worship was Domitian."

to by name in the letters to the seven churches, a certain Antipas from Pergamon (Rev 2:13). But it remains unclear why and by whom Antipas was put to death, and his death seems to lie “in a relatively distant past.”¹⁶ Thus, at least for the time of the final edition of Revelation to which the seven letters should be ascribed, no real persecution can be established. It is also uncertain when ‘John’ was banished (Rev 1:9)—if he ever was—and whether the scene does not merely provide a fictional literary setting.¹⁷ The reference to numerous martyrs in other parts of the book might be explained by the use of Jewish or early Christian traditions or as a part of the author’s expectation for the future. Therefore, the crisis presupposed by the book seems to be not only—or not primarily—a crisis caused by external oppression but rather an internal crisis of the Christian communities and, regarding the threat of persecution, a “perceived crisis,”¹⁸ rooted in the mind or expectation of the author or editor.

(c) As a consequence of these observations, the date of Revelation toward the end of the reign of Domitian has lost some of its most important arguments,¹⁹ even if it is not abandoned by many interpreters due to the lack of compelling alternatives. Moreover, the view of the theological focus of the book has changed. Rather than a book of comfort for martyrs, Revelation seems to be a prophetic adhortation to the addressees to remain faithful to the word of God

¹⁶ Aune, *Revelation*, 1:lxv.

¹⁷ The notion of tribulation in Rev 1:9 shows in my view that the reference to Patmos not only implies that John was there to proclaim the Gospel. But the banishment of the alleged author could also have happened a certain time before Revelation was composed, so that the scene was taken as a fictional literary setting for the composition of the visionary sequence of the book. Cf. J. Frey, “Erwägungen zum Verhältnis der Johannesapokalypse,” 417 and 428; idem, “Johannes und die Apokalypse,” in *Von Adam bis Eva* (ed. J. Rohls and G. Wenz; Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, forthcoming).

¹⁸ Cf. Thompson, *The Book of Revelation*, 27–8; extensively A. Yarbro Collins, “Persecution and Vengeance in the Book of Revelation,” in *Apocalypticism* (ed. D. Hellholm; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1983), 729–49; idem, *Crisis and Catharsis* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1984). Cf., however, the critical remarks by P. G. R. de Villiers, “Persecution in the Book of Revelation,” *Acta Theologica* 22.2 (2002): 47–70.

¹⁹ Cf. the hints in note 5, above. Due to the lack of alternatives, the majority of interpreters still locate Revelation in Domitian’s time. An earlier date of the composition, (under Nero’s reign?) is hardly plausible, even though it might be appropriate for an earlier stage of the book (cf. Aune, *Revelation*, 1:cxxiii–cxxxii) or some of its components. In my view, the composition might have happened rather later, at the time of Trajan (cf. Frey, “Erwägungen zum Verhältnis der Johannesapokalypse,” 427; J.-W. Taeger, *Johannesapokalypse und johanneischer Kreis*, 22).

and the testimony of Jesus and to keep themselves separate from 'Babylon'—or even to leave that city (Rev 18:4)—in order to join the city of God, the New Jerusalem, i.e. eternal salvation. But if participation in the eternal salvation requires the addressees to keep apart from impurity and idolatry (Rev 21:27; cf. 2:7, 17; 3:5, 12 etc.), i.e.—at least among others—from the cult and commerce represented by the Roman imperium, then the issue of the Roman imperial cult returns, possibly not as the primary reason for a present or future persecution but as the most prominent challenge for the worshippers of God and Christ.

2. *'Babylon' and the Beast—the Imperium and the Imperial Cult as the Main Challenge in Rev 4–22*

One of the major problems for the interpretation of the book is the difference between the letters to the seven churches, in which the situation of the churches is addressed directly, and the visionary main part of the book, where it is addressed only by means of visionary allusions and spurious explanations, so that it is quite difficult to identify clear references to the present situation in this part.²⁰ But undoubtedly, many elements of the visionary sequence do refer to the world of the addressees—and not to a distant future²¹—in order to reveal the true character of the challenges the readers have to face. I can mention only the most obvious references: It is now that the victorious Lamb is on the throne (Rev 5:5–9), Satan has been cast down from Heaven (Rev 12:9–12), and the woman's progeny is about to face his anger (12:17). The references to the present sit-

²⁰ On the relation between chs. 2–3 and chs. 12–13 cf. H. Ulland, *Die Vision als Radikalisierung der Wirklichkeit in der Apokalypse des Johannes: Das Verhältnis der sieben Sendschreiben zu Apokalypse 12–13* (TANZ 21; Tübingen and Basel: Francke, 1997).

²¹ In the compositional framework, the makarism of the readers (Rev 1:3) and the command not to seal the words of the book (22:10) demonstrate that the book addresses the present situation of the addressees and their imminent future, not a distant time. The attempt to relate only chs. 2–3 with the present and chs. 4–22 with the future is therefore misguided. The formula "what is and what will happen hereafter/in a short time" (Rev 1:1; 1:19; 4:1; 22:6) which conveys an eschatological notion (cf. Dan 2:28–9, 45 LXX and Theod.) confirms that even the future expectation of the book is related to the *near* future. Cf. H. G. Günther, *Der Nah- und Enderwartungshorizont in der Apokalypse des heiligen Johannes* (Forschung zur Bibel 41; Würzburg: Echter, 1980), 60–160.

uation are most apparent in chapters 13 and 17, when the imperium is presented by two impressive images: the beast which not only mirrors the dragon from Rev 12:3, but also unites and even supersedes the four beasts of Dan 7:3–7,²² and the harlot ‘Babylon’ which obviously represents the ‘Goddess Rome’. Rhetorically, the reference is highlighted by the proclamation formula in Rev 13:9 addressing the attention of the readers or hearers and by the call to understand the number of the beast in Rev 13:18. Both remarks are directed at the readers who are urged to understand the identity of the beast (or the beast-like character of the person or institution described by this image) and to see the universal worship of the beast (13:4, 8, 12, 15f.) and its ‘blasphemy’ (13:5f.) as elements of their own world. Similarly, the extensive explanation of the *angelus interpretes* in Rev 17:7–18 clearly calls the readers to understand the ‘mystery’ of the harlot and the beast (Rev 17:7) and to identify the big city that rules over the world (17:18) and is located on seven hills (17:9). Possibly, some of the readers also shared the fascination uttered by the visionary in Rev 17:6, so that now they are led to a deeper insight when they have to see and—moreover—appreciate (Rev 19:2–3) that this glorious city is about to fall. From the explanations given in 17:9 and 17:18 there can be no doubt that the harlot is meant to be an image for Rome with its cultural and idolatrous influence. The reference to the beast on which the woman rides (Rev 17:3) provides the link with ch. 13, so that the common message of the two chapters is sufficiently clear, notwithstanding the difficulty of identifying the mysterious king that “was, is not and will be” (Rev 17:8), the riddle of the head which was wounded and healed (Rev 13:3) or the true meaning of the number of the beast (Rev 13:18).

Rev 13 and 17 aim at describing the *Roman imperium*, but they highlight *different aspects* of its appearance. In Rev 13 the focus is on the military power of the empire which is presented as an eschatological power opposed to God and his reign (Rev 13:1f., 6f.), but cultic (13:4, 8, 12–15) and economic (Rev 13:16f.) aspects are also included. The image in Rev 17–18, which is strongly linked to the first beast from Rev 13 (cf. Rev 17:3), visualizes the power of seduction (Rev 17:2; 18:3) caused by the worldwide cultural influence of

²² The number of the seven heads makes up the sum of the number of the heads of the four beasts in Dan 7:3–7 (1+1+4+1 heads), the ten horns are taken from the fourth beast (Dan 7:7).

the empire, but with the focus on economic aspects (Rev 17:4, 8; 18:3, 11ff.). Both passages mention hostility against Jesus and his followers (cf. Rev 13:6–7, 15–16; 17:14; 18:24). Both chapters also hint at the fact that the emperor himself is implied, not just the empire or some of its institutions. In Rev 13, there is not only the concluding riddle of the number of the beast, which is best solved by the gematric reference to the name of Caesar Nero²³ but also an interesting grammatical phenomenon: In Rev 13:8, 14 the beast (τὸ θηρίον) is referred to by use of masculine forms (13:8: αὐτόν; 13:14: ὅς), confirming that the image points to a human being (cf. 13:18: ἀριθμὸς ἀνθρώπου). This is not only a slip of language but an unambiguous sign that for the author the image of the beast represents not only an impersonal institution but more precisely a male human being, the emperor himself who is ultimately represented by the mysterious number mentioned in 13:18. The list of kings in Rev 17:9–11 finally confirms the identification of the beast with one of the seven kings (17:8, 11), so that even in Rev 17–18, where the focus is on the fate of the city, the identity of its ruler—the emperor—is still in view. In Rev 13 and 17ff., the allusions to the present situation are more obvious than in any other part of the book. Here we also find the clearest references to the Roman imperial cult.

Cultic elements are quite obvious in the description of the beast when it is said that “the whole earth” (Rev 13:3) or “all the inhabitants of the world” (except those mentioned in 13:8) were astonished and followed the beast and worshipped the dragon and the beast (13:4), chanting: “Who is like the beast and who can fight against it?” The reference to prostration (προσκυνεῖν 13:4[bis], 8) and the hymnic rhetorical question, “Who is like . . .?”, echoing Biblical and post-Biblical formulae of worship,²⁴ make it sufficiently clear that the beast receives God-like adoration by all humankind. In the view of Revelation, not only is the beast’s power satanic in

²³ Cf. Aune, *Revelation*, 2:771–773; H.-J. Klauck, “Do They Never Come Back? Nero Redivivus and the Apocalypse of John,” 280ff.; more extensively R. Bauckham, “Nero and the Beast,” in *The Climax of Prophecy: Studies on the Book of Revelation* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1993), 384–452.

²⁴ Cf. Exod 15:11; Ps 35:10; 71:19; 89:7, 9; 113:5; Isa 40:25; 46:5; 1QH 15:28 (ed. Sukenik); 1QM 10:8–9; 4Q381 15 6). Most interesting is also the contrast between this rhetorical question and Rev 15:3–4 where the author demonstrates that he knows the form quite well.

origin,²⁵ but even more so is the worship offered to it which is actually a parody of the true worship of God and the Lamb.²⁶ Thus, even if the word is not used here, the beast (i.e. the Roman emperor) is viewed as the 'Antichrist', the eschatological enemy of God and Christ who acts blasphemously against God and fights against the saints (Rev 13:7). The community of believers mentioned in the book of life (Rev 13:8) is therefore seen as a group of outsiders, separate from the οἰκουμένη of all tribes, nations, tongues and nations.

These aspects are even strengthened in the description of the beast from the earth which has the precise function to cause the universal worship of the first beast (13:12), i.e. to propagate the cult of the Roman emperor, by performing miraculous signs (σημεῖα), and to compel people to participate in the cultic prostration before the beast (13:15). The miracles mentioned not only correspond to magical rituals performed in contemporary cults but also mirror Elijah's miracle of fire (1 Kgs 18:38; 2 Kgs 1:10) thereby evoking the semantic screen of the question who is the true God. So the antagonism between the cult of the Roman emperor and the true worship of God and Christ is deepened, and there can be no doubt that in view of this chapter the most dangerous aspect of the Roman influence is not its military power, its economic influence or even its hostility against Christians, but rather the fact that all humankind is seduced or even compelled to worship the beast, so that also the Christians are in danger of falling. If they can remain steadfast, this can only be explained by divine protection or predestination in the book of life from the beginning of the world (Rev 13:8; cf. 17:8).

Cultic aspects are less prominent in Rev 17–18, but the image of the "whore" (Rev 17:1, 5, 15ff.; 19:2) draws on a Biblical background which conveys the notion of idolatry. The idea that the kings

²⁵ Cf. Aune, *Revelation*, 2:735.

²⁶ This is suggested by a number of remarkable parallels between Rev 5 and Rev 13: Both receive power and authority, the Lamb from the one seated on the throne, the Beast from the Dragon (5:7, 12; 13:2), both rule over people from all tribes, languages, and nations (5:9; 13:7), both receive worship, the Lamb from the heavenly beings who represent the created order, the Beast from all the inhabitants of the earth (5:12; 13:4), and in both cases hymns are cited. Furthermore, and most obviously, the Beast's mortal wound that has been healed (13:3) is a parody of the Lamb's sign of recognition, the marks of his slaughter (5:6). Cf. J. Roloff, *Die Offenbarung des Johannes* (2nd ed.; ZBKNT 18; Zürich: TVZ, 1987), 135f.; Aune, *Revelation*, 2:726.

of the earth fornicated with her (17:2; 18:3, 9; 19:2) or became drunk from the wine of her fornication (17:2, cf. 17:4; 18:3) points to the fact that the author is not primarily concerned with the numerous pagan cults which were common in the Hellenistic world but focuses on the seduction of idolatry (cf. 18:23) which is peculiarly related to Babylon, i.e. Rome. Thus, the focus on the impact of the emperor cult is continued also in Rev 17–18. In the other chapters of Rev 13–19 “the issue of proper worship is always near the surface.”²⁷ In Rev 14, there is a cultic scene at the beginning, with the Lamb being worshipped on Mt. Zion, followed by the proclamation of three angels: The first one proclaims the “eternal gospel” for all tribes and tongues and nations that all should fear God and worship (προσκυνεῖν) him (14:6–7). The second one proclaims the downfall of Babylon—Rome—which has given from the wine of its immorality to all the nations. In this proclamation the scenes of Rev 17–18 are anticipated (14:8). The third angel extensively warns all those who worship the beast and its image or receive his mark that they shall drink from the wine of the wrath of God (14:9–10). In this sequence, the topics of true and false worship, adoration of the beast, drinking from the wine of immorality and suffering from the wine of God’s wrath are closely related, and the link between the beast in ch. 13 and the harlot Babylon in ch. 17–18 is strengthened. The heavenly scene in Rev 15:1–8 is also characterized by cultic imagery: In a heavenly temple scene those who have been victorious over the beast and its image sing a song of praise to the true God, and from the seven bowls which are poured out over the earth, the fifth one is poured out over the throne of the beast (16:8–9; cf. 13:2), and the last one leads to the destruction of Babylon, which has to drink the cup of the wine of God’s wrath (16:18–19), a scene which is afterwards presented again in greater detail (Rev 17–18). The heavenly voice *gegōnen* “it has happened” (16:17) shows that this is the incident which is most vividly expected by the author and which opens up the series of eschatological judgments and the beginning of God’s eternal reign (19:2–3, 6). In the first of these judgments, the beast and the kings of the earth are definitely defeated by the victorious Christ and finally thrown into the lake of fire (19:19–20). With their destruction, “the topic of imperial cults disappears from the text.”²⁸ But the cursory

²⁷ Friesen, *Imperial Cults and the Apocalypse of John*, 146.

²⁸ Friesen, *ibid.*, 147.

look at Rev 13–19 shows that the topic of the emperor cult is not confined to Rev 13 and 17 but is present in this whole part of the book with which ch. 13 and 17 are thoroughly linked by numerous references.

Considering that the issue of the true veneration of God is already focused in the heavenly throne scene in Rev 4–5, which presents the true worship of God and the Lamb as the background against which the later description of the veneration of the beast must appear as a blasphemous imitation,²⁹ we can even say that the topic of true and false worship dominates the whole main section of the book. Even if it is not the only important theme, the worship of the emperors “is the defining activity that separates those who are condemned from those who belong to God.”³⁰ The background of the topic of true and false worship is formed by the scenes of heavenly worship, which make up the ‘backbone’ of the visionary main part of the book, beginning with Rev 4–5, and then proceeding through 8:1–6, 11:15–19 to 14:14–15:8.³¹ Moreover, these images of the heavenly cultic sphere are linked with the opening vision in Rev 1:12–20 which is also shaped by cultic imagery. In view of these observations, it would be unwise to underestimate the cultic dimension as a whole, the issue of true and false worship for the addressees of Revelation, or to deny the imperial cult’s relevance for the communities addressed in the seven letters.

3. Pergamon and “Satan’s Throne”:

No reference to the Roman Imperial Cult in the Seven Letters?

Of course, there are differences between the style of the seven letters and that of the visionary main part of the book. Even if the letters address the present situation of the communities directly, they do so in a very general manner. In spite of some rather precise references to the local context of the seven cities,³² the external challenges of

²⁹ See note 26, above.

³⁰ Friesen, *Imperial Cults and the Apocalypse of John*, 147. Cf. Rev 13:8; 15:2; on the other hand 14:9; 16:2; 19:20; 20:15.

³¹ On the relevance of these passages and the narrative and semantic connections between them, cf. the dissertation by F. Tóth, *Kult als Wirklichkeitskonstruktion. Motiv- und religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen zur Kultsprache und zum Kultkonzept in der Johannesoffenbarung* (Ph.D. diss., Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg, 2005).

³² Cf. generally C. J. Hemer, *The Letters to the Seven Churches*. Of course, not all

the communities are described quite generally as suffering from ‘blasphemy’ of the synagogue (Rev 2:9), as tribulation (Rev 2:9), impending imprisonment (2:10), and as an expected temptation of the whole world (Rev 3:10). It is possible that the letters cannot be too specific since they do not address every single community separately, but rather address all seven communities (and perhaps even more communities) together.³³ Moreover, we have to consider that the actual addressees certainly knew their own situation, so that there might have been no need to mention the challenge presented by the Roman institutions or, more precisely, by the imperial cult. Finally, the letters are primarily concerned with an internal challenge provided by a deviant position within the communities (which is, however, related to the external challenges). The teaching and practice of the Nicolaitans,³⁴ which is also characterized as fornication (Rev 2:14, 20f.), seems to represent a more liberal position towards pagan cults, as well as towards eating sacrificial meat. This might also include a liberal attitude towards participation in the imperial cult or in related ceremonies,³⁵ even if this is not mentioned explicitly.

Textually, there is only one possible reference to aspects of the imperial cult in the seven letters: the characterization of Pergamon as the place where “the throne of Satan” is (Rev 2:13), with reference to the hostility towards Christians and the martyrdom of Antipas. Even if it remains unclear whether the designation “the throne of Satan” refers to a peculiar institution or building,³⁶ we can see from

of the local references mentioned by Hemer are equally convincing, see D. E. Aune, “Foreword,” *ibid.*, xv–xxii (xx–xxi).

³³ According to H. Ulland, *Die Vision als Radikalisierung der Wirklichkeit*, 160, it is the openness of the descriptions that enables a broader audience to receive the message of the letters.

³⁴ The different polemical labels “Jezabel” and “Balaam” (both taken from biblical history) probably refer to the same group which seems to have influenced most of the communities addressed.

³⁵ On the connection between the imperial cult and civic life in associations and guilds see P. A. Harland, *Associations, Synagogues, and Congregations. Claiming a Place in Ancient Mediterranean Society* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003); idem, “Honours and Worship: Emperors, Imperial Cults and Associations at Ephesus (First to Third Centuries C.E.),” *Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses* 25 (1996): 319–334 “Honouring the Emperor or Assailing the Beast”, *JSTNT* 77 (2000): 99–121; idem, “Imperial Cults Within Local Cultural Life: Associations in Roman Asia,” *Ancient History Bulletin/Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte* 17 (2003): 85–107.

³⁶ According to Aune, *Revelation*, 1:182, the articular form ὁ θρόνος suggests “that the author is alluding to a specific throne (either literally or figuratively), which he expects the readers to recognize”. Cf. C. J. Hemer, *The Letters to the Seven Churches*, 84–5, and Aune, *Revelation*, 1:182–184. The most important suggestions: (1) The

other parts of the book that "Satan's throne is linked in some way with Rome."³⁷ In Rev 13, the dragon or Satan (cf. 12:9) is the one who empowers the beast by giving him "his throne" (13:2), the worship of the beast is closely linked with the worship of the dragon (13:4, 7), and the beast's hostility against the followers of Jesus is also related with the dragon's hostility against them (12:17; 13:10, 15). In Rev 16:10 the fifth bowl is poured out over "the throne of the Beast," so that "its/his kingdom was darkened," and this plague functions as a last warning, just before the seventh bowl will then cause the destruction of Babylon, the great city (16:19). In both passages "the throne of the Beast" most plausibly refers to Rome.

What does this mean for the interpretation of the phrase in 2:13? If the author/editor of Revelation only wanted to characterize Pergamon as a center of Roman administration or judicial decisions, it remains unclear why he focuses on Pergamon and not on Ephesus which was the capital of the Roman province at his time. If he only wanted to address Pergamon as a center of Greco-Roman cults, this would not be specific for Pergamon but also a feature of all the cities in his world. The most plausible reason is, therefore, that the old capital Pergamon had the honor to be the first city of Asia where a provincial cult for Augustus and the goddess Rome had been installed in 29 B.C.E.³⁸ Other cities such as Smyrna³⁹ and Ephesus

acropolis itself looks like a great throne, especially when approached from the south, but this is perhaps not more than "a picturesque association" (Hemer, *ibid.*, 85). (2) The city was "a center of pagan religion generally" (*ibid.*, 84). (3) It has been referred to the impressive throne-like altar of Zeus Soter in the Berlin Pergamon Museum with the serpent motif of its sculptures which could be seen from greater distance on the top of the acropolis (cf. A. Deissmann, *Licht vom Osten* [4th ed.; Tübingen: Mohr, 1923], 240 n. 8; cf. also W. Radt, *Pergamon. Geschichte und Bauten einer antiken Metropole* [Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1999], 168–180) but there is no direct connection with the Roman imperial cult. (4) Another suggestion is the famous Asklepios cult of Pergamon, but it seems difficult to connect the Asklepieion beneath the city with the notion of the expression "throne of Satan."

³⁷ Yarbro Collins, "Persecution and Vengeance," 733, who suggests that "the residence of the Roman governor or the place where he made judicial decisions" is referred to; cf. the more precise information in Aune, *Revelation*, 1:183.

³⁸ Cf. S. J. Friesen, *Twice Neokoros. Ephesus, Asia and the Cult of the Flavian Imperial Family* (Religions in the Graeco-Roman World 116, Leiden et al.: Brill, 1993), 7–15. It should be noted that the ruler cult had an older tradition in Pergamon since there was a sanctuary for the cult of the Attalid dynasty of Pergamon (on this, cf. W. Radt, *Pergamon*, 245–249). So, for the population of the East, the veneration of the new ruler of the world, Augustus, was not nothing new or revolutionary but just the logical consequence of the fact that the Romans now were in power in the East.

³⁹ On the cult for Tiberius, Livia and the Senate which was installed in 26 C.E., see Friesen, *Twice Neokoros*, 15–21.

followed, causing a severe rivalry between those three cities,⁴⁰ and Ephesus might have gained the predominant position with the cult of the Sebastoi granted under Domitian⁴¹ and then with its second ‘neocorate’ permitted by Hadrian,⁴² but the privilege of primacy remained with Pergamon. So the most probable interpretation of Rev 2:13 is that the mention of “the throne of Satan” in Pergamon refers to Pergamon’s primacy with regard to the provincial imperial cult.⁴³ Within the book as a whole such a reading is strongly supported by the fact that Satan’s “throne” is mentioned again in 13:2, when it is narrated that the Dragon gave “his throne” to the beast from the sea. According to Aune this “clearly suggests the association of the throne with the imperial cult.”⁴⁴

Within the framework of his two-stage theory, Aune suggests that the final editor of Revelation, who composed the seven letters, formed the phrase “Satan’s throne” under the influence of the (older) passage from Rev 13:2, thereby alluding to a feature of Pergamon which he expected the readers to recognize. But if this is true, it sounds rather odd that the editor should not have seen the relevance of the imagery and the message of Rev 13 for the communities he addressed. Moreover, if the issue of true and false worship, precisely the worship of the “beast,” was the prominent challenge for the hearers or readers addressed in Rev 13–19 (or in the visionary main part as a whole), it is hardly plausible that this challenge was not important for an author or editor who used and edited the visionary material—even if we might allow some time between the original composition of some of the visionary scenes and the final edition of Revelation.⁴⁵

⁴⁰ Cf. Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* 36.48.

⁴¹ Cf. Friesen, *Twice Neokoros*, 134–136, and 165–167; idem, *Imperial Cults and the Apocalypse of John*, 43–52.

⁴² On the imperial cult in Ephesus see Friesen, “The Cult of the Roman Emperors in Ephesus: Temple Wardens, City Titles and the Interpretation of the Revelation of John,” in *Ephesus—Metropolis of Asia* (ed. H. Koester; HTS 41; Valley Forge: Trinity, 1996), 229–250; E. Collas-Heddeland, “D’une capitale à l’autre: Pergame, Ephèse et le culte impérial provincial,” in *Idéologies et valeurs civiques dans le monde Romain* (ed. H. Inglebert; Festschrift C. Lepellerey; Paris, 2002), 229–250; P. Trebilco, *The Early Christians in Ephesus from Paul to Ignatius* (WUNT 166; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 30–37.

⁴³ Cf. also A. Yarbro Collins, “Persecution and Vengeance,” 733–4: “‘Satan’s throne’ is best understood as a reference to Pergamum as the oldest and probably the most prominent center of the imperial cult in the province”.

⁴⁴ Aune, *Revelation*, 1:182.

⁴⁵ In my view, there is no compelling reason to date some of the visionary scenes

Furthermore, given the development of the Roman imperial cult in Asia Minor between ca. 70 and 110 C.E., there is hardly any reason to assume that the challenge for the Christian communities should have disappeared. The scarce evidence we have points precisely towards the opposite: From the time of Trajan, the letter of Pliny (ca. 112 C.E.)⁴⁶ shows that denunciations of Christians occurred, sometimes anonymously,⁴⁷ and that Roman officials adhered to a practice (which might not have been completely new at that time) by which Christian could be forced to sacrifice in front of the emperor's image, so that they were threatened with either apostasy or death.⁴⁸ To be sure, persecution was not pushed actively by Roman authorities, nor were Christians accused for their non-participation in the imperial cult, but sacrifice in front of Trajan's statue is at least part of the test as practiced by Pliny (even if Trajan in his answer modestly mentions only the "prayers to our gods").⁴⁹ But it is obvious that the danger of being put to death is clearly connected to particular sacrificial acts demanded by Roman officials, which included the veneration of the emperor. From this data we should conclude that the challenge for Christians provided by certain aspects of the emperor cult increased than disappeared during those decades. Thus, the view that such a challenge did not exist for the final editor or the addressees of Revelation seems historically implausible. Moreover, if it is assumed that the expression "Satan's throne" in Rev 2:13 was taken from Rev 13:2, then such a view is also textually implausible.

Finally, the hermeneutical problem should be considered. Even if the text of Revelation might have been composed in different stages

as early as the time of Nero. Thus, the time-span between their composition and the final edition of Revelation should not be too long.

⁴⁶ Pliny the Younger, *Ep.* 10.96.

⁴⁷ Cf. also the letter by Hadrian to the proconsul Fundanus of Asia (ca. 123 B.C.E.), in Justin Martyr, *Apology* 1.68; cf. Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* 4.9.1–3; cf. S. Benko, "Pagan Criticism of Christianity During the First Two Centuries A.D.," *ANRW* 2.23.2:1055–1118 (1079–81).

⁴⁸ There is some debate whether the data from Bithynia is also valid for the province of Asia and for the period one or two decades earlier, but firstly, the cities of Asia Minor were crowded with insitutions of the Imperial Cult, even more than Bithynia (cf. the map in Price, *Rituals and Power*, XXV), and Pliny's report suggests that trials against Christians had happened before (but he did not take part in them), and that the opinion was not uncommon that being a Christian in itself (*propter nomen ipsum*) implied committing peculiar crimes and deserved punishment. At least these views were not completely new at Pliny's time.

⁴⁹ Pliny the Younger, *Ep.* 10.97.

or over a longer period of time, the text must make sense as a whole in the final shape into which it was edited and spread. Therefore, we should also assume (until there is evidence to the contrary) that the first readers, or at least part of them, grasped the message.⁵⁰ This includes that they were able to relate not only the seven letters but also the images in the visionary main part to their own experience and their own worldview.

4. *The Visions as 'Radicalization' of the Readers' Present Reality*

How could the readers of Revelation understand the visionary main part of the book in its relation to the seven letters? Considering that the situation as described in Rev 2–3 differs markedly from the situation presupposed in Rev 4–22 (mainly regarding persecution and martyrdom) and that Rev 4–22 cannot be read as an exclusive reference to an expected future (neither as an exclusive reference to any situation in the readers' past), the relation must be interpreted differently. In a comparison between Rev 2–3 and Rev 12–13, Harald Ulland has suggested a rhetorical interpretation of the relation between the seven letters and the visionary parts of Revelation.⁵¹ Such a rhetorical view does not preclude the possibility that Revelation was composed in a complicated literary process but it meets the hermeneutical demand that the book should be understood as a whole.

In Ulland's view, the visions provide a "radicalization" of the readers' reality which is described in Rev 2–3. Even though clearly related to the surface of the present reality, the visionary images reveal the deeper, the true character of the ruling powers (e.g. the Roman emperor as 'the beast') and they develop an overwhelming argument for the conviction that the final victory is with God and Christ who is the true 'king of kings and Lord of Lords' (Rev 19:16). Thus, the visions also give deeper reasons for the admonitions of the seven letters. Only from the visionary part does it become clear why the

⁵⁰ Of course, we must consider the possibility that the viewpoint of Revelation was not more than a minority option within the spectrum of viewpoints of Christian communities in Asia. Probably 'Jezabel' had more followers and good arguments as well.

⁵¹ H. Ulland, *Die Vision als Radikalisierung der Wirklichkeit in der Apokalypse des Johannes: Das Verhältnis der sieben Sendschreiben zu Apokalypse 12–13* (TANZ 21; Tübingen and Basel: Francke, 1997).

readers should 'leave Babylon' (Rev 18:4) and distance themselves from the surrounding society: not generally because of its pagan character but particularly because of the all-pervading influence of the Roman Empire which attracts idolatrous veneration from all parts of the world and treats the Christians in a hostile manner, causing either apostasy or persecution. Even though the description of the situation in the seven letters only mentions three other factors of the crisis as perceived by the author, the 'Nicolaitans' as Christian adversaries, the blasphemy of the 'Jews' (Rev 2:9; 3:9) and local or provincial authorities with the power to imprison Christians, the subsequent visions reveal that the most powerful adversary behind the struggles mentioned is the Roman Empire with its cultural and cultic impact, and that this adversary must fall before the universal reign of God and Christ can be established.

The question is, then, how the cultic impact of the empire affected the struggles addressed in the seven letters? To answer this, we must look at some of the elements of the Roman imperial cult in the world of the addressees and the references to the imperial cult in Revelation.

5. *Imperial Cult in the World of the Addressees and the Text of Revelation*

There is no need to present here the bulk of evidence on the imperial cult and its impact in the world of Revelation.⁵² Obviously, the seven cities were extensively shaped by institutions of provincial and municipal imperial cults,⁵³ and the three biggest ones were in permanent rivalry regarding the veneration given to the emperors:⁵⁴ Pergamon with its primacy of the first provincial imperial cult; Smyrna with its cult for Tiberius, his mother Livia and the Senate (but also

⁵² Cf., most comprehensively, Friesen, *Imperial Cults and the Apocalypse of John*.

⁵³ For the municipal cults and the municipal involvement in provincial worship see the information in Friesen, *Imperial Cults and the Apocalypse of John*, 56–103. Chiefly the Augusteion at Ephesus was an important element due to its dominating location near the agora. When Ephesus finally received a provincial cult under the reign of Domitian, the two temples, the Augusteion and the new temple of the Sebastoi were closely linked.

⁵⁴ Cf. M. Dräger, *Die Städte der Provinz Asia in der Flaviozeit. Studien zur kleinasiatischen Stadt- und Regionalgeschichte* (Frankfurt a. M. etc.: Lang, 1993), 111–121; Friesen, *Twice Neokoros*, 57f.; Price, *Rituals*, 129–132; cf. also the map *ibid.*, XXV.

with a very old tradition of a temple for the goddess Rome since 193 B.C.E.); and Ephesus with its cult for the Sebastoi granted under Domitian with its colossal statue, but also with a number of other imperial institutions.⁵⁵ Municipal imperial cults are known from Sardes,⁵⁶ Philadelphia,⁵⁷ and Laodiceia,⁵⁸ and the veneration of the emperor within different professional associations was also an important factor of civic life, not only in Thyateira⁵⁹ but equally in the other cities.⁶⁰ So there can be no doubt that during Domitian's time and later the imperial cult was an element of the Asian society with a pervading impact on the inhabitant's everyday life.

There has been, however, a debate among historians about the true character of the Roman imperial cult. Should it be seen as a truly religious commitment or as a mere expression of political loyalty?⁶¹ Such an alternative, however, is probably misleading. The imperial cult is a political, social *and* religious phenomenon, and even though the political dimension is quite obvious, it must be viewed as a wider cognitive system that provided a construction of reality in itself.⁶² Festivals and games, processions and statues structured urban space and time, so that all these elements inevitably touched the life and—possibly—also the worldview of Jews and Christians who lived within that world.

There has also been a debate on the significance of the imperial cult for Jews and Christians. According to a widespread view, Jews as adherents of a long-established *religio licita* were free from the par-

⁵⁵ Cf. Price, *Rituals*, 187 and 254–257; R. Strelan, *Paul, Artemis and the Jews in Ephesus* (BZNW 80; Berlin and New York: de Gruyter, 1996), 98–105; Friesen, *Twice Neokoros*, passim.

⁵⁶ Cf. Price, *Rituals*, 66 and 259.

⁵⁷ This may be concluded from the double change of its name into Neokaisareia under Tiberius and Philadelphia Flavia under Vesapasian and from the coinage of the city; cf. A. Brent, *The Imperial Cult and the Development of the Church Order* (VCSup 45; Leiden et al.: Brill, 1999), 188.

⁵⁸ Cf. Friesen, *Imperial Cults and the Apocalypse of John*, 61ff.

⁵⁹ This is the only one of the seven cities where there is no archaeological evidence for imperial institutions before the time of Domitian. Price, *Rituals*, 260, only mentions a royal room in the Hadrianeion.

⁶⁰ On this, cf. Friesen, *Imperial Cults and the Apocalypse of John*, 104–121.

⁶¹ Thus, e.g., F. Graf, "Kaiserkult," *Der Neue Pauly* 6:143. But cf. the critical discussion of this view in Price, *Rituals*, 15f.; M. Clauss, "Deus praesens. Der römische Kaiser als Gott," *Klio* 78 (1996): 400–433 (400–403); H.-J. Klauck, *Die religiöse Umwelt des Urchristentums* (vol. 2; Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1996) 71–73; Ph. A. Harland, *Associations*, 243.

⁶² Price, *Rituals*, 248.

icipation in the imperial cult whereas Christians, as soon as they could be distinguished from the Jews, were no longer protected by the Jewish privileges, so that they could be forced to sacrifice and had to face the danger of persecution.⁶³ But this view is probably too simplistic. The incidents under Caligula demonstrate that there were no assured rights which could not be withdrawn by the spontaneous will of a Roman emperor. Moreover, the documents of Jewish rights quoted by Josephus⁶⁴ do not mention the emperor cult at all. It is granted, generally, that the Jews were to be allowed to live according to their paternal customs, and one might suppose that this normally implied that it was accepted that Jews did not erect statues in honor of the emperors⁶⁵ and that they did not sacrifice *to* but only *on behalf* of the Caesar.⁶⁶ But since the emperor cult was not a monolithic phenomenon but differed from one city to another⁶⁷ and—more importantly—since the emperor cult was never demanded by official legal documents, a formal exemption was not possible.⁶⁸ Therefore, the legal situation was far from safe for Jews, and from time to time their otherness made them suffer hostile acts by their pagan contemporaries. On the other hand, we should not ignore the fact that Christians, when being distinguished from the members of the synagogue, could attract even more suspicion, cause rumors and evoke hostile acts, accusations and denunciations. This kind of hostility was hardly caused by their non-participation in the ceremonies of the emperor cult but rather more generally by their contempt for the Gods ('atheism') and by other rumors of some crimes committed by the Christians. However, the situation for Jews was different from that of Christians: while the well-established status of the Jewish

⁶³ Cf. E. M. Smallwood, *The Jews under Roman Rule from Pompey to Diocletian: A Study in Political Relations* (2nd ed.; SJLA 20; Leiden: Brill, 1981), 137, 147; C. Hemer, *The Letters to the Seven Churches*, 8–10; J. N. Kraybill, *Cult and Commerce*, 192–195.

⁶⁴ Cf. M. Pucci Ben-Zeev, *Jewish Rights in the Roman World* (TSAJ 74; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998), esp. 460–468 and 471–480.

⁶⁵ Cf. Josephus, *c. Ap.* 2.73 and also Tacitus, *Hist.* 5.5.4.

⁶⁶ Cf., Josephus, *c. Ap.* 2. 77–78; Cf. Pucci Ben-Zeev, *Jewish Rights*, 473.

⁶⁷ On this, see basically E. Bickermann, "Consecratio," *Le Culte des Souverains dans l'Empire Romain* (ed. W. den Boer; Entretiens sur l'Antiquité classique 19; Genève: Fondation Hardt, 1973) 3–25 (9).

⁶⁸ A. M. Rabello, "The Legal Condition of the Jews in the Roman Empire," *ANRW* 2.13: 662–762 (703): "It can be definitely stated that from the strictly legal point of view no such exemption existed." Cf. also M. Bernett, *Der Kaiserkult als Teil der politischen Geschichte Iudaeas unter den Herodien und Römern (30v.–66 n. Chr.)* (Habil.-Schrift, Universität München, 2002; forthcoming in WUNT), 11.

communities in Asia Minor kept them in a relatively secure situation, the status of the Christians became increasingly dangerous the more they were seen as a group of their own.⁶⁹

But if denunciations and accusations against Christians did not originate with their non-participation in the imperial cult, why does the author or editor of Revelation take such a fierce anti-Roman stance? Why does he draw or adopt images of Rome as the harlot providing fornication for all the nations and that of the Roman emperor as the anti-Christian 'beast'? Why does he establish non-participation in the imperial cult as the main criterion for gaining final salvation? Why does he construct such a polemical parallelism between the true worship of the Lamb and the idolatrous worship of the beast, so that he even draws the image of the heavenly throne ceremonial, as David E. Aune states, in "such a striking resemblance to the ceremonial of the imperial court and cult that the latter can only be a parody of the former"?⁷⁰

In his pioneering article on the "Influence of the Roman Imperial Court Ceremonial" on Revelation, David E. Aune has described a number of polemical similarities which suggest that Revelation not only hints at particular phenomena of the imperial cult⁷¹ but also shapes its own description of the heavenly worship by use of images which the addressees could have known from their own world: the image of God surrounded by myriads of agents is not only shaped by traditions of Jewish apocalyptic thought,⁷² but has also parallels in the Roman imagery of Jupiter and his council,⁷³ and also the

⁶⁹ The split between the synagogue and Christian communities was probably reinforced by the situation after the imposition of the *fiscus Iudaicus* when, especially under Domitian, when the tax was collected very strictly, and not only Jews but other people with a Jewish way of life were forced to pay the *fiscus* (Suetonius, Dom. 12.2); cf. E. M. Smallwood, *The Jews under Roman Rule*, 371ff.; P. Hirschberg, *Das wahre Israel*, 55–71; J. Frey, "Das Bild ‚der Juden‘ im Johannesevangelium und die Geschichte der johanneischen Gemeinde," in *Israel und seine Heilstraditionen im Johannesevangelium* (ed. M. Labahn, K. Scholtissek and A. Strotmann; Festschrift Johannes Beutler; Paderborn: Schöningh, 2003), 33–53 (47ff.)

⁷⁰ Aune, "The Influence of Roman Imperial Court Ceremonial," 5.

⁷¹ Cf., e.g., in Rev 13 the military power (13:2), universal worship (13:3f.8), the erection of statues (13:14), the connection with economy (13:17) and possibly also demonstrative miracles (13:13–15).

⁷² On the apocalyptic and especially mystic parallels of the heavenly throne scene, cf. G. Schimanowski, *Die himmlische Liturgie in der Apokalypse des Johannes* (WUNT 2/154; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002).

⁷³ Aune, "The Influence of Roman Imperial Court Ceremonial," 8.

depiction of the exalted Christ in Rev 1, though entirely biblical in its individual elements, evokes associations of the imagery of Nero as Apollo-Helios and his enthronement in a 'Golden House.'⁷⁴ The twenty-four elders with their golden crowns and their ritual prostration likewise bring to mind various aspects of Hellenistic kingship and Roman court ceremonials,⁷⁵ and the same is true for the hymns and acclamations such as 'king of kings and Lord of Lords' (Rev 19:16) and the honorific titles applied to Christ with striking parallels to the acclamations and titles applied to the Caesars.⁷⁶ We might add the imagery of the triumph in Rev 19:11ff. and the procession of the seven angels from the heavenly temple and their bowls (Rev 16:1ff.) which call to mind common sacrificial acts.⁷⁷ One might even suppose that the strongly mythical plot in Rev 12,⁷⁸ which evokes the tale of Apollo's birth from Leto,⁷⁹ is shaped as a polemical reflection of the imperial cult,⁸⁰ in which the figure of Apollo had an important function from the time of Augustus,⁸¹ but subsequently also for Caligula and Nero who styled themselves as the incarnation of Apollo or *sol invictus*.⁸² Domitian is linked with the the Ephesian

⁷⁴ Aune, *ibid.*, 11ff.

⁷⁵ Aune, *ibid.*, 12ff.; cf. also idem, *Revelation*, 2:741ff.

⁷⁶ Aune, "The Influence of Roman Imperial Court Ceremonial," 20.

⁷⁷ Brent, *Imperial Cult*, 193.

⁷⁸ On the mythological structure of Rev 12 see the hermeneutically thorough investigation of my doctoral student M. Koch, *Drachenkampf und Sonnenfrau. Zur Funktion des Mythischen in der Johannesapokalypse am Beispiel von Apk 12* (WUNT 2/184; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004); cf. also J. Frey, "Die Himmelskönigin, die Sonnenfrau und die Johannesapokalypse. Zum mythologischen Hintergrund und zur textpragmatischen Funktion eines wirkmächtigen Bildmotivs", *Wiener Jahrbuch für Theologie* (vol. 5 [2004], ed. Evangelisch-Theologische Fakultät der Universität Wien; Münster: LIT, 2005), 95–112.

⁷⁹ Cf. P. Busch, *Der gefallene Drache. Mythenexegese am Beispiel von Apokalypse 12* (TANZ 19; Tübingen: Francke, 1996), 81–83; J. U. Kalms, *Der Sturz des Gottesfeindes. Traditionsgeschichtliche Studien zu Apokalypse 12* (WMANT 93; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2001), 114–122.

⁸⁰ Cf. J. W. Van Henten, "Dragon Myth and Imperial Ideology in Revelation 12–13," *SBLSP* 33 (ed. E. H. Lovering; Atlanta: SBL, 1994), 496–515, and the very thorough article by H. Omerzu, "Die Himmelsfrau in Apk 12. Ein polemischer Reflex des römischen Kaiserkults," in *Apokalyptik als Herausforderung der neutestamentlichen Wissenschaft* (ed. M. Becker and M. Öhler; WUNT 2/*; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, forthcoming).

⁸¹ Cf. P. Lambrechts, "Die 'apollinische' Politik des Augustus und der Kaiserkult," *Clio* 5 (1953): 65–82; P. Zanker, *Augustus und die Macht der Bilder* (3rd. ed.; München: Beck, 1997), 52–61; cf. also H. Omerzu, "Himmelsfrau", § 3.

⁸² Cf. A. Kerkeslager, "Apollo, Greco-Roman Prophecy, and the Rider on the White Horse in Rev 6:2," *JBL* 112 (1993): 116–121 (119); M. Bergmann, *Die Strahlen der Herrscher. Theomorphes Herrscherbild und politische Symbolik im Hellenismus und in der*

Artemis, Apollo's sister.⁸³ The mythological tale of Isis, which also provides striking parallels with Rev 12, was used under the reign of Domitian who also held the title 'Horus.'⁸⁴ Heike Omerzu demonstrates in a recent article that in Rev 12 and its reception of the myths of Isis and Leto certain elements of the imperial cult—especially under Domitian—are deliberately reversed: it is not the child that symbolizes the Caesar as a son of god,⁸⁵ but the dragon which subsequently evokes the beast from the sea. His seven diadems (Rev 12:3) may allude to the depiction of the Caesars with a crown of seven rays on coins and other images, as derived from the imagery of the sun-god Apollo.⁸⁶ The rhetorical effect of the polemical parallelisms obviously is the message that the Caesar is neither the incarnation of Apollo, nor his son, nor son of the *Dea Roma*, but just the opposite: he is the beast shaped according to Seth or Typhon, the evocation of the devil.⁸⁷ Accordingly, the emperor cult appears as a diabolical imitation of the real worship which is only appropriate for the one God and the Lamb on his throne. In the view of the author, worshipping the emperor in any way is mere blasphemy which causes the wrath of the true God and the Lamb and definitely excludes one from salvation. Therefore, the readers are strongly warned against participation in any way in the emperor cult.

But the question remains why Revelation focuses so strongly on the cultic aspect of the Roman Empire. Of course, there is also criticism of Rome's cultural and economic influence⁸⁸ and of its military power, which threatened not only the Christians but caused all nations to tremble, but, strikingly, cultic aspects are most prominent,

römischen Kaiserzeit (Mainz: Philipp von Zabern, 1998), 127–230; M. Clauss, *Kaiser und Gott. Herrscherkult im Römischen Reich*, Stuttgart-Leipzig 1999, 98–111.

⁸³ Cf. Friesen, *Twice Neokoros*, 119.

⁸⁴ Cf. van Henten, "Dragon Myth," 506f.; Omerzu, "Himmelsfrau," n. 104.

⁸⁵ Cf. Omerzu, 52: "Zieht man das besondere Bewußtsein Domitians für die politischen Implikationen des Kaiserkults und sein Streben nach göttlichem Status in Betracht, ist es denkbar, daß der Seher in Apk 12 nicht nur allgemein auf die Rolle der *Dea Roma*, sondern durchaus auch konkret auf Domitia und den verstorbenen Sohn des Domitian anspielt. Zu deren Schicksal kann die Erzählung von der Verfolgung der Himmelsfrau und ihres Sohnes in Apk 12 als polemische Parallele aufgefaßt werden."

⁸⁶ Cf. Bergmann, *Strahlen*, 75, 110.127.131–233 etc.; Omerzu, "Himmelsfrau," § 4.

⁸⁷ Cf. Omerzu, "Himmelsfrau," § 5.

⁸⁸ Cf. Kraybill, *Imperial Cult and Commerce*, passim, and R. Bauckham, "The Economic Critique of Rome in Revelation 18," *The Climax of Prophecy*, 338–383.

and the issue of participation or non-participation in the worship of the beast (connected with receiving its mark) is described as completely decisive for eschatological salvation or destruction. Should this be the point where the author or editor of Revelation saw the most dangerous temptation for his readers? How can we imagine this?

One observation should not be overlooked: Revelation as a whole is deeply shaped by cultic elements and motifs. Beginning with the opening vision in Rev 1:10–20, there is a sequence of visions of the heavenly throne room or temple (Rev 4–5; 8:1–6; 11:15–19; 14:14–15:8) which is of fundamental relevance for the structure of the book as a whole, and, of course, the final vision of the ‘New Jerusalem’ also shares many cultic elements. Therefore, in the counter-culture of Revelation,⁸⁹ cultic elements form the backbone for the whole construction of reality,⁹⁰ and one may ask whether the author shaped his literary world as a ‘counter-image’ of the real world as he perceived it or whether his fundamentally cultic mindset lead him to see the crucial problem particularly in the cultic dimensions of everyday city life. But even then: What was the danger he saw for the communities addressed?

A clue can be taken from the close link between the worship of the beast or the reception of its mark and economic activities. According to Rev 13:16–17, only those who have the mark are able to buy or sell. This is a very clear hint to the fact that the author saw the most dangerous temptation not in the big institutions of the emperor cult, the temples, processions or games but in elements of everyday life where Christians were in danger of committing idolatry and, more precisely, eating meat sacrificed to idols. These two aspects, idolatry (under the term *πορνεία*) and *εἰδωλόθυτα* are also mentioned in the seven letters (Rev 2:14,20) as elements of a lifestyle which was permitted (or even taught) by ‘Jezebel’ or the ‘Nicolaitans’ but strictly rejected by the author. Considering the praise for the community which is ‘poor’ (but spiritually rich) in the wealthy city of Smyrna (Rev 2:9) and the rebuke of the community in Laodiceia that considers itself ‘rich’ but is truly poor (Rev 3:17), the author

⁸⁹ For that term see Brent, *Imperial Cult*, 208. *Ibid.*: “the imagery of the Apocalypse is to be understood as a Judaeo-Christian reconstruction of the values of pagan culture in which the impress of that culture is re-expressed in a reversed form.”

⁹⁰ This has been demonstrated convincingly by the dissertation of F. Tóth, *Kult als Wirklichkeitskonstruktion*.

seems to advocate distancing oneself from the successful economy. This corresponds to the fact that 'Jezebel' teaches in Thyateira which was famous for its guilds of craftsmen and merchants.⁹¹ Most probably Christians could encounter the temptation of eating sacrificial meat when they were members of professional associations as craftsmen or merchants, where banquets were held and quite often the emperor was also honored in a way that the author considered idolatrous.⁹² In the view of the author, even such a 'smooth' form of the emperor cult⁹³ had to be avoided in any respect. The radical demand he communicates to his readers is that they should rather leave those guilds, limit their social and business contacts or even abandon their professional and economic status,⁹⁴ in order to avoid being polluted or 'fornicated' by 'Babylon' and its idolatry.

One might view this position as a sectarian one that led Christians to a status outside the society of their cities. Other Christians—such as the Nicolaitans—might have held a different position here, and even Paul was much more pragmatic in his advice on sacrificial meat (1 Cor 8:1–11:1). No less than the author or editor of Revelation, Paul was clearly opposed to any kind of idolatry or participation in pagan religious ceremonies, but on the issue of eating meat from the market or in private homes, he was less scrupulous than other Christians in Corinth⁹⁵ and, of course, his fellow Jews. Compared with Paul, the position taken by the author or editor of Revelation may be characterized as much more Jewish (or Judaizing) in a situation, however, in which the small Christian groups did not have the same possibilities as the synagogue. Jews could possibly keep their status, get kosher meat and use their own social network while the Christians could only withdraw from society—or be involved in rituals which the author considered as idolatrous. It is not necessary to discuss this dilemma here further, but from the mindset of the author or editor

⁹¹ Cf. Hemer, *The Letters to the Seven Churches*, 108ff.

⁹² Cf. on details Harland "Honoring the Emperor and Assailing the Beast," id., *Associations*, 55–87, 259–263.

⁹³ Cf. Klauck, "Das Sendschreiben an Pergamon," 141: "weicher Kaiserkult".

⁹⁴ Harland, *Associations*, 262.

⁹⁵ On these problems, cf. J. Fotopoulos, *Food Offered to Idols in Roman Corinth: A Social-Rhetorical Reconsideration of 1 Corinthians 8:1–11:1* (WUNT 2/151; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), and most recently V. Gäckle, *Die Starken und Schwachen in Korinth und Rom* (WUNT 2/*; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, forthcoming).

of Revelation and from the situation as reconstructed here, it seems quite plausible that the cultic elements of everyday life and primarily the veneration of the emperor became the crucial problem for the book of Revelation and its addressees—as perceived by its author or editor.

RULER OR GOD? THE DEMOLITION OF HEROD'S EAGLE

Jan Willem van Henten

One of Revelation's many *cruces interpretum* concerns the book's brief and unspecific statements about the violent deaths of Jesus followers.¹ The circumstances of the persecution that may have led to these deaths remain largely unknown. Scholars have even argued that most of these passages do not refer to oppression by political or economic institutions in Roman Asia in John the prophet's past or present. The passages merely show that John perceived his group as being in conflict with these institutions and that, consequently, he anticipated persecutions in the future.² From a tradition-historical perspective, most of the passages, at least, suggest a context of persecution. The vision about the two beasts in chapter 13 evidently builds on the famous deliverance story of Daniel's three companions in Daniel 3, suggesting an analogous situation for Daniel's companions and Jesus followers.³ The vocabulary in some of Revelation's persecution passages matches that of Jewish and Christian passages about martyrdom.⁴ The last point that suggests a setting of persecution is that

¹ Rev 1:9; 2:13; 6:9–11; 7:9; 11:7–8; 12:11; 13:7, 10, 15; 14:13; 16:6; 17:6; 18:24; 19:2 and 20:4. D. E. Aune, *Revelation* (3 vols.; WBC 52A–C; Dallas: Word Books; Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997–1998), 1:lxiv–lxix. I warmly thank Luuk Huitink for his help with references and Emma E. England for correcting my English.

² See especially L. L. Thompson, *The Book of Revelation: Apocalypse and Empire* (New York-Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 172–4.

³ Daniel 3 has been re-interpreted as a martyrdom story in early Christianity, J. W. van Henten, "Daniel 3 and 6 in Early Christian Literature," in *The Book of Daniel: Composition and Reception* (2 vols.; ed. J. J. Collins and P. W. Flint; Leiden: Brill, 2001), 1:149–69.

⁴ Πίστις/πιστόω meaning "faithfulness", "remaining faithful" (Rev 13:10; cf. 1:5; 2:10, 19), ὑπομονή/ὑπομένω ("endurance," "endure"; Rev 13:10, cf. 1:9; 2:2, 19; 14:12); νικάω etc., triumph over the opponent by death (Rev 12:11; cf. 3:21; 5:5; 6:2; 17:14). Cf., for example, 4 Macc 1:11; 6:10; 7:4, 21; 8:2; 9:6, 30; 15:24, 30–1; 16:1, 17, 19, 21–2; 17:2, 7, 15. See about the πίστις of martyrs, J. W. van Henten, "The Tradition Historical Background of Rom. 3:25: A Search for Pagan and Jewish Parallels," in *From Jesus to John: Essays on Jesus and New Testament Christology in Honour of Marinus de Jonge* (ed. M. C. de Boer; JSNTSup; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993).

the relevant passages in Revelation are part of a presentation of two worldviews that exclude each other: the ideological clash between the world of the ruler and the realm of God in accounts of martyrdom. Thus, on the one hand common vocabulary and motifs suggest an overlap between Revelation and early Jewish and Christian passages about persecution and/or martyrdom; on the other hand, the passages in Revelation keep us largely in the dark about the circumstances of the persecution. There is, for example, no information about the interrogation or execution of Jesus' followers by the Roman or local authorities.

The obvious way out of this *aporia* which has been chosen by many commentators is to fill these gaps in Revelation's data by reading the passages together with other relevant sources. These include Roman passages about the persecution of Christians, the foremost being, of course, Pliny's correspondence with Trajan about how to deal with obstinate Christians.⁵ Another helpful corpus in this respect concerns writings of martyrdom from areas that are important in Revelation, such as the *Martyrdom of Polycarp* and the *Martyrdom of Pionius* both located in Smyrna.⁶ I would like to contribute by calling attention to an episode that to my knowledge so far has not been discussed in connection with Revelation's passages about the violent deaths of Jesus' followers.

⁵ There is a consensus now that Domitian did not organize a persecution of Christians. See for relevant passages P. Guyot and R. Klein, *Das frühe Christentum bis zum Ende der Verfolgungen: eine Dokumentation* (Texte zur Forschung 60; Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft), 1:24–37. Thompson, *Book of Revelation*, 95–115, analyses the Roman sources about Domitian, including the character assassination by historians who shared negative opinions of the senatorial elite or created propaganda for Domitian's successors. He concludes that there is no basis for claiming that Domitian persecuted Christians. See also Aune, *Revelation*, 1:lxvi–ix.

⁶ Scholars have drawn very different conclusions on the basis of these writings concerning the participation of Jews in the persecution and execution of Christians. C. J. Hemer, *The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia in their Local Setting* (2nd ed.; JSNTSup 11; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1989), 8–11, argues that Rev 2:9, 3:9; *Mart. Pol.* 13; 21; *Act. Pion.* 4.14–5 concern persecutions of Christians by Jews. E. L. Gibson, "The Jews and Christians in the Martyrdom of Polycarp: Entangled or Parted Ways?," in *The Ways That Never Parted: Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and Early Middle Ages* (ed. A. H. Becker and A. Y. Reed; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 145–58, cannot accept Hemer's view and argues that the passages about the Jewish participation in the persecution of Christians in the *Martyrdom of Polycarp* result from an editorial intervention intended to criticize Judaizing Christians. See also her "Jewish Antagonism or Christian Polemic: The Case of the Martyrdom of Pionius," *J ECS* 9 (2001): 339–58.

Josephus' writings include two versions of the removal and destruction of Herod the Great's golden eagle on the Jerusalem temple. A discussion of the perpetrators' motivations and the ruler's response to the act may put the persecution passages in Revelation in a different light. The fact that Revelation has become part of the Christian canon and Josephus has remained within Judaism, although there was a trend among some Christian readers to consider him the "fifth evangelist," should not bother us too much. Recent studies about the "parting of the ways" demonstrate, if anything, that there was continuity and interaction between Judaism and Christianity in the first centuries. At first glance, Josephus' eagle passages and the hints to persecution in Revelation appear very different, but a closer look may reveal intriguing similarities. The destruction of Herod's eagle concerns a famous case of civil disobedience, but Josephus' reports correspond in narrative form and content to accounts of martyrdom. The eagle episode also shows how a clash between the authorities of God and the ruler creates a perceived crisis for the believers. Consequently, this could lead to rebellious acts and the execution of the perpetrators, which may put the lack of references to persecution situations in a new light. In addition, Josephus' reports are chronologically close to Revelation, being probably not more than a few decades older than John the prophet's work.⁷ Consequently, my contribution will offer an introduction to the eagle episodes in *The Jewish War* and *The Jewish Antiquities*, a translation of the version in the *Antiquities*, discussions of the symbolic meaning of the eagle as well as the perpetrators' motivations for its demolition, and a conclusion that briefly determines the relevance of the episode for the interpretation of Revelation's persecution passages.

1. *Josephus' Golden Eagle episode*
(B.J. 1.648–55; 2.5–7; A.J. 17.148–64)

There are two versions of the destruction of the golden eagle episode in Josephus (B.J. 1.648–55 with 2.5–7 and A.J. 17.148–64). The narrative context of the larger eagle section, *The Jewish War* 1.431–673,

⁷ For surveys of the dates of Revelation and Josephus' works see Aune, *Revelation*, 1:lvi–lxx, and P. Bilde, *Flavius Josephus between Jerusalem and Rome: His Life, his Works and their Importance* (JSPSup 2; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1988), 79; 103–6; 113.

focuses upon the disastrous history of Herod's family including the execution of Mariamme's sons Alexander and Aristoboulos, as well as Antipater.⁸ The parallel narrative in *Antiquities* 16–17 intermingles the events of Herod's rule with the history of his family. Yet, the immediate context of the golden eagle episode is rather similar in both works. Josephus situates the destruction of the golden eagle on top of the entrance to the temple's sanctuary at the end of Herod's life, when he had become seriously ill (*B.J.* 1.645, 647, 656–8; *A.J.* 17.146–7, 168–173).⁹ In fact, Herod did not recover from this illness and died soon afterwards. Both narratives refer to Herod's seventieth year (*B.J.* 1.647: “for he was about seventy;” *A.J.* 17.148: “for he was around his seventieth year”).¹⁰ Josephus' casual remark in *War* 1.656 that “the inspired persons” (τοὺς ἐπιθείάζοντας) considered this illness to be his punishment for the execution of the sages who instigated the destruction of the eagle is missing in the *Antiquities* account. Here, however, the sages themselves suggest, in their encouragement of the youths, that Herod suffered more than other humans because of his construction works that violated the ancestral laws (17.150). The chain of events between the eagle incident and Herod's death is basically the same in both works (*B.J.* 1.656–673; *A.J.* 17.164–199),¹¹ and the golden eagle episode concerns Herod's last public performance in both narratives. Josephus offers a precise date for the demolition of the eagle, because *A.J.* 17.167 informs us that there was an eclipse of the moon during the night after the youngsters were burned. This eclipse has been calculated for March 12–13, 4 B.C.E.¹²

⁸ The composition of *The Jewish War* highlights Herod's misfortune in the context of the disastrous fate of his sons (*B.J.* 1.622, 646–647, 665; *A.J.* 17.94–95).

⁹ Cf. νόσος in *B.J.* 1.649, 654, 656; *A.J.* 17.146, 150 (twice), 168.

¹⁰ The translations of Josephus' *Antiquities* are my own unless otherwise stated.

¹¹ This chain of events is:

- Substitution of Matthias as high priest by Joazar (missing in *B.J.*; *A.J.* 17.164–167)
- Treatment of illness (*B.J.* 1.656–658; *A.J.* 17.168–173)
- Hippodrome episode (*B.J.* 1.659–660, 666; *A.J.* 17.173b–181, 193)
- Letter from Caesar about the execution of Acme and the verdict for Antipater (*B.J.* 1.661; *A.J.* 17.182–183)
- Herod's suicide attempt and Antipater's execution (*B.J.* 1.662–664; *A.J.* 17.183–187)
- Herod's final testament (*B.J.* 1.664; *A.J.* 17.188–190)
- Herod's death and funeral (*B.J.* 1.665–673; *A.J.* 17.191–199).

¹² Michel and Bauernfeind, *Flavius Josephus*, 1:426; Schalit, *König Herodes*, 638.

1.1. *Translation of Josephus, Jewish Antiquities 17.156–164*

(148) Because he had given up hope of recovering—for he was around his seventieth year—he became enraged and handled everything¹³ with pure anger and bitterness. The reason was his conviction that he was despised and that the (Jewish) people took pleasure in his misfortune, especially because some of the more highly respected persons among the people rebelled against him for the following reason. (149) Judas, the son of Sariphaeus, and Mattathias, the son of Margalothus, were the most erudite interpreters of the ancestral laws among the Jews, unequalled to any others, and much beloved by the people as well because of their educating the young. All who were pursuing the acquisition of virtue spent day after day with them. (150) When these (interpreters) found out that there was no remedy to cure the king's illness, they stirred up the young—because of all the constructions carried out by the king contrary to ancestral law—to knock these down and carry away prizes for their piety in accordance with the laws. For, all these disasters, which he experienced to a larger degree than humans customarily do, certainly happened to him because of his boldness¹⁴ in constructing these things against the law's prohibition. This was especially true of his illness. (151) For, Herod had been engaged in certain projects that were contrary to the law, because of which, in fact, Judas and Matthias with their followers brought accusations against him. For, the king had constructed on top of the sanctuary's great entrance an ornament and a costly one indeed, namely a great golden eagle. But the law forbids those who intend to live in accordance with it to engage in the construction of statues as well as to become involved in setting up images of any living creatures in public. (152) Therefore, the sages ordered (them) to tear down the eagle. For, (they said), even if they ran the risk of getting the death penalty that would be reserved for them, the virtue gained by death would appear much more beneficial than the pleasure of life for those about to die for the safety and the preservation of their ancestral customs. For, they would arrange an eternal glory of receiving praise: they would leave behind their lives as an ever-lasting memory for being praised by both those who

¹³ Perhaps "everyone" with Hudson's conjecture, see B. Niese, *Flavii Iosephi Opera edidit et apparatu critico instruxit* (7 vols.; Berlin: Weidmann, 1885–1895), 4:96.

¹⁴ With Greek MSS M and A as well as Latin MSS, Niese, *Flavii Iosephi*, 4:97.

are now alive and by people in the future. (153) Moreover, even for those who live without taking risks the misfortune is unavoidable, with the result that it is noble for those who strive for virtue to depart from life with praise and honor by accepting their¹⁵ death sentence. (154) For, death with an eye on a noble cause, of which the suitor is danger, brings great comfort. And, at the same time, it secures for their sons and all other relatives who survive, men and women, for them too it secures a benefit of glory that comes from them. (155) With such words, they stirred up the youngsters. And when a rumor reached them saying that the king had died, the sages also supported this. At midday, they climbed up, pulled the eagle down and cut it to pieces with axes while many were lingering in the temple. (156) Because the attempt was reported to him, the king's commander suspected that their true intention was of greater significance than what they (actually) succeeded in doing. He arrived with a large force, sufficient to withstand the crowd that was attempting to destroy the ornament. He attacked them when they did not expect it. As a crowd loves to do, they had undertaken this bold act more out of a whimsical idea than by cautious foresight, disorganized and without anticipation of anything that would help them. (157) He captured no less than forty of the youngsters, who persevered courageously during his attack, while the rest of the crowd started to flee. He also caught the instigators of the bold act, Judas and Mathias, who considered it shameful to flee his onslaught. Next, he brought them before the king. (158) When they came before the king and he asked whether they had been so bold to pull down his ornament, they said: "Yes, our thoughts have been thought through and what we did was done with excellence which is most suitable for men. For, we have assisted in a cause, which was entrusted to us because the divinity deemed us worthy, and which was (159) taken care of in obedience to the law. It is not at all surprising if we consider the preservation of the laws, which Moses left behind in writing, following the counsel and the instruction of the divinity, to be more important than your decrees. We will gladly endure death and every punishment you lay upon us, for it is not because of unrighteous deeds but out of love of piety that we are bound to have thorough knowledge of what living with it means. (160) And they all said these

¹⁵ With the *editio princeps* MSS read "his death sentence," Niese, *Flavii Iosephi*, 4:97.

things, and the boldness of their speech was in no way inferior to the confidence they had when they did not refrain from carrying out their action. And the king had them bound and sent them off to Jericho. He summoned the Jewish leading authorities, and (161) when they arrived, convened an assembly in the amphitheater. Then, while he was lying down on a couch because of his incapacity to stand, he enumerated all of his benefactions¹⁶ that had taken place concerning them, (162) namely the great cost that he provided for the construction of the temple, while the descendants of Hasmonaeus had not been able to arrange such a magnificent thing in God's honor in the hundred and twenty-five years they ruled; (163) he also had adorned it with remarkable ornaments by which he had come to hope that he had left a memorial to himself and that after his death a favorable reputation would be left. Finally, he began to shout that not only had they not abstained from acting outrageously against him while he was still alive, but also that because of their outrageous action during daylight and for the whole crowd to see they had taken hold of what had been erected by him and had destroyed it by their outrageous behavior. They pretended this was directed against him, but in fact, should someone examine what had happened, they were committing sacrilege. (164) But because of his cruelty and their fear that in his outrage he would even exact vengeance on them, those present said that these things had been done without their approval, but also that it seemed to them that they should not go unpunished. So he acted to these others rather indulgently. But he relieved Mathias from his office as high priest on the ground that he had been partly responsible for these things, and appointed his wife's brother Joazar as high priest.

1.2. *Composition and Content*

The composition of *Jewish Antiquities* 17.148–164 can be summarized as follows:

- I §§ 148–9: Introduction, characterization of Herod and both sages
- II § 150: The sages' incitement and their motivation

¹⁶ With the Epitome MS E. Most readings of the MSS do not make sense. Hudson's conjecture τῶν ἀγωνιῶν does and may be translated by "his struggles."

- III § 151: Josephus' explanation, the case of the golden eagle
- IV §§ 152–154: Continuation of the sages' incitement, noble death rhetoric
- V § 155: Description of the destruction of the eagle
- VI §§ 156–157: Counter actions by the king's commander
- VII §§ 158–160: Trial scene: opposition of the king's laws and God's laws
- VIII §§ 160–164: Assembly in Jericho: Herod's apology and the accusation of the 'rebels'
- IX § 164: Conclusion, with replacement of the high priest.

The introduction of the golden eagle episode in the *Antiquities* informs the reader at the start that Herod had turned into a cruel tyrant because of his incurable illness. Josephus immediately characterizes Herod in this section with the help of stereotypes of wicked tyrants (below). On the other hand, the instigators of the rebellion against him (ἐπανέστησαν αὐτῷ, 17.148), Judas son of Sariphaeus, and Mattathias son of Margalothus,¹⁷ are introduced in highly positive terms: they were part of the most respected members of the Jewish people (τινες τῶν δημοτικωτέρων ἀνθρώπων, 148), they were the most erudite interpreters of the ancestral laws of their time, and they were beloved by the people because of their role as the youths' educators (149; cf. *B.ḡ.* 1.649). Josephus' introduction of this section of the narrative suggests, therefore, that a clash occurred between highly respected representatives of the Jewish people and their brutal tyrant.

Josephus suggests, in line with his setting of the episode, that Herod's incurable illness triggered the rebellion (17.150, 155; cf. *B.ḡ.* 1.649, 651). That would imply strategic planning by the perpetrators, who waited for a good opportunity after the eagle was put on the entrance of the sanctuary, in their opinion (see below), a violation of the second commandment.¹⁸ Apparently, serious illness of the ruler offered such an opportunity. Suetonius' description of Augustus' final day implies that Augustus took his death lightly and played with it by using theatrical *topoi*, but Suetonius also suggests that the emperor frequently inquired whether the rumors of his illness were

¹⁷ The names vary in the textual traditions, Niese, *Flavii Iosephi Opera*, 4:96. A. Schalit, *König Herodes: Der Mann und Sein Werk* (2nd ed.; Berlin: De Gruyter, 2001), 638, supposes that the two sages were Pharisees (p. 737), although this is mentioned neither in *The Jewish War* nor in the *Antiquities*.

¹⁸ Unfortunately, Josephus does not inform us when the eagle was constructed.

causing popular disturbances.¹⁹ The sages' incitement of the youths in Josephus' *Antiquities* is motivated by Herod's transgressions of the laws in his building activities (17.150) and Josephus presents the case of the golden eagle as one of these transgressions (151). In fact, the eagle is the only offensive building activity by Herod explicitly mentioned in the narrative. The continuation of the youths' exhortation in 152–154 is full of noble death rhetoric and focuses on the rewards for those who would execute the eagle's destruction.

The description of the eagle's demolition in 155 is rather brief, but Josephus presents this provocation of Herod as such a risky undertaking that it almost turns into a suicide attempt. The deed was executed at midday, when many people were present in the temple. The king's commander counters the act efficiently (156–157) with the arrest of forty perpetrators as well as the two instigators, Judas and Matthias. The remark in the margin that associates these law-abiding 'rebels' with the stupid behavior of a crowd in 156 deconstructs their rather positive image elsewhere in the story (below). The arrest leads up to a brief trial scene (158–160) including a dialogue between Herod and the anonymous perpetrators that focuses almost entirely on the response of the perpetrators.²⁰ The boys confess their deed,²¹ elaborately explaining it in a way that recalls the Maccabean martyrs' refusal to give in to Antiochus IV.²² They explain to Herod that their deed was ordered by God and that God's laws overruled the king's decrees.

The assembly that follows the interrogation was held in the theatre in Jericho, or perhaps the amphitheater (160–164).²³ During

¹⁹ Suetonius, *Aug.* 99.

²⁰ It is strange that neither in *The Jewish War* nor in *The Jewish Antiquities* do the two sages appear as Herod's opponents in this dialogue.

²¹ The version in *The Jewish War* states this, while *The Jewish Antiquities* version elaborates quoting the youth's statement (*B.J.* 1.653; *A.J.* 17.158–159). Confessions in martyr texts: G. Buschmann, *Martyrium Polycarpi—Eine formkritische Studie: Ein Beitrag zur Frage nach der Entstehung der Gattung Märtyrerakte* (BZNW 70; Berlin/New York, 1994), 113–9, 193–5, 205, 229–32, 251–3; J. W. van Henten, *The Maccabean Martyrs as Saviours of the Jewish People: A Study of 2 and 4 Maccabees* (JSJSup 57; Leiden: Brill, 1997), 89–90; 237–8.

²² See also *B.J.* 1.652–653. Cf. 2 Macc 6:19; 7:2, 30; 4 Macc 5; 8:1–9:9; 12:1–19.

²³ The Greek MSS literally mention "the same theatre" as the assembly's location. Naber's conjecture implies that it took place in the amphitheatre, which is mentioned in *A.J.* 17.194. Neither building has been excavated in Jericho, but E. Netzer, *Die Paläste der Hasmonäer und Herodes' des Grossen* (Mainz am Rhein: von Zabern, 1999), 56–59, argues that the hippodrome south of Tell es-Samarat was,

this, Herod in his anger points out the uniqueness of his temple restoration project and accuses those arrested of having committed sacrilege. The concluding paragraph (164) is brief; it forms an *inclusio* with the beginning of the eagle narrative by referring once again to Herod's tyrannical character. The participants in the assembly²⁴ clearly disconnect themselves from the perpetrators out of fear of being executed as well. They get away with this, but the high priest Matthias was replaced because he was suspected of being a member of the rebellious group.

1.3. *Opposition of Ruler and 'Rebels'*

The *Antiquities* narrative of the episode consistently presents a tyrannical Herod and the two sages with their youthful followers as each other's opposites. It could be that Josephus' sources already indicated that Herod behaved as a tyrant during the last phase of his life. Alternatively, Josephus himself is responsible for a shift in Herod's image, perhaps adapting his presentation of Herod to the conventional themes of a noble death story. Either way, at the end of his life, after he became seriously ill, Herod is depicted as a tyrant. Moments of severe anger occur earlier in both Herod narratives,²⁵ but during most of his life according to *The Jewish War* as well as the *Antiquities* the king is capable of controlling, concealing or ending his anger (e.g. *B.ĵ.* 1.320, 484; *A.ĵ.* 17.50, 83). The beginning of the golden eagle episode, however, strongly suggests that Herod had become a tyrant. A cluster of references constructs Herod as a wicked tyrant, whose behavior is determined by rage, cruelty, bitterness as well as the belief the people held him in contempt.²⁶ The emphasis on Herod as a tyrant at the beginning of the section returns

in fact, a multifunctional building, which also functioned as a theatre. *The Jewish War* does not specify the location of the meeting.

²⁴ Josephus is not at all explicit about Herod's counterpart in this section, but context and content imply that οἱ δὲ of 17.164 most probably refers to the Jewish officials mentioned in 17.160.

²⁵ *B.ĵ.* 1.212, 214, 252, 320, 484, 507, 526, 565, 571, 654–655; *A.ĵ.* 14.180, 436; 15.83, 211, 214, 229; 16.90, 199–200, 262, 366; 17. 50, 69, 83, 191.

²⁶ H. Berve, *Die Tyrannis bei den Griechen* (2 vols; Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1967), 352–509 (see also Index sv *Tyrannenpersönlichkeit*, 2:771–2); C. Mossé, *La tyrannie dans la Grèce antique* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1969), 141–5. About Antiochus IV in 4 Maccabees: van Henten, *Maccabean Martyrs*, 258–67.

at the end with references to Herod's rage and cruelty (17.164). The relevant vocabulary can be listed as follows:

- Rage: 148 (ἐξηγρίωσεν); 164 (ἐξαγριώσας)²⁷
- Anger: 148 (ὀργή)
- Bitterness: 148 (πικρία)²⁸
- The belief he was held in contempt by the people: 148 (δόξα τοῦ καταφρονεῖσθαι καὶ ἡδονῇ τὰς τύχας αὐτοῦ τὸ ἔθνος φέρειν)
- Cruelty: 164 (ὀμότηα).²⁹

Elsewhere in Josephus there are incidental passages that might associate Herod with stereotypes of evil tyrants, but they are far less explicit and do not present as consistent a picture, as the golden eagle episode and Herod's final days.³⁰ The image of Herod as a tyrant is continued in the narrative about his final period including his unbelievably cruel plan for a mass execution in the Jericho hippodrome after his death.³¹ Furthermore, Josephus' own comments in his report of the king's death (17.190–192) include the following sentence: “He was a cruel man for everybody alike (ὁμὸς εἰς πάντας ὁμοίως), being smaller than his anger and bigger than his justice, though he was gifted with a good fortune, which was better than anybody else's (17.191).”

Another motif that links the eagle story to martyrdom is Herod's suspicion that the people held him in contempt (*A.J.* 17.148). Josephus mentions other cases of rulers held in contempt, but they are usually held in contempt by individuals or small groups.³² The anonymous

²⁷ Similar vocabulary concerns Alexandra (*A.J.* 15.44), rebels (17.216), Athronges and his group (17.282), Tiberius (18.226–227), Gaius (19.27), and Sentius Saturninus' tirade against tyrants (19.175).

²⁸ Herod's bitterness is referred to a few times elsewhere, for example concerning Herod's taxes (*B.J.* 1.494; 2.87; *A.J.* 16.235; cf. 17.205).

²⁹ A few other rulers are described in Josephus' works with a similar vocabulary: *B.J.* 1.97 about Alexander Jannaeus' bitterness and cruelty in connection with his crucifixion of 800 Jews; *A.J.* 18.282 about Gaius' anger and bitterness (εἰ δ' ἐκπικρανθεὶς Γάιος εἰς ἐμὲ τρέψει τὸ ἀνήμεστον τῆς ὀργῆς); also *A.J.* 19.130.

³⁰ *B.J.* 1.473, 526 (concerning Alexander and Aristoboulos, scheming of Antipater); *A.J.* 16.363 (during the accusation of Alexander and Aristoboulos, μέγιστα θυμοῦ καὶ ἀγριότητος ἐνεδίδου σημεῖα).

³¹ Cf. Josephus' introduction of the plan in *A.J.* 17.173 (μέλαινά τε χολὴ αὐτὸν ἦρει ἐπὶ πᾶσιν ἐξαγριαίνουσα).

³² See Syllaueus' contempt for Herod (*B.J.* 1.633) or Saul being held in contempt by wicked persons (*A.J.* 6.67). Cf. Daniel's contempt for Darius' commandments (*A.J.* 10.255), Ahasverus' response to Vashti's refusal (11.193–194), Sabinus' contempt

father who kills his seven sons as well as his wife reproaches Herod because of the king's humble descent or lowness of spirit (ταπεινότης, *B.ḡ.* 1.311–313; and more explicitly *A.ḡ.* 14.429–430). In the eagle episode, however, Herod apparently fears that the entire Jewish people held him in contempt, which reminds one of martyrdom stories. In the martyrdom of the Maccabean mother and her seven sons Antiochus IV suspects that he is being held in contempt by the mother and her only remaining son when he tries to persuade his son to give in to the Greek way of life by agreeing to eat pig meat (2 Macc. 7:24–31; cf. 4 Macc. 12:1–19).³³ The distinction between the languages used in 2 Macc. 7 emphasizes the ethnic-cultural dimension of the antithesis of the wicked king and the martyrs with their conflicting views about the proper way of life—Greek or Jewish. The martyrs speak among themselves in their ancestral language, perhaps Hebrew, but they talk to the king in Greek, his language. Antiochus' seduction of the youngest son fails, and the boy announces the king's punishment in harsh terms (2 Macc. 7:31; cf. 4 Macc. 12:11–14). Although the contempt for the ruler in Josephus is not elaborated as in 2 and 4 Maccabees, the motif in *A.ḡ.* 17.148 again compares Herod with wicked tyrants.

The Jewish War indicates a significant shift in Herod's pattern of behavior at the time of the eagle incident in a different way. In the introduction to the story in *War* Josephus uses the phrase δι' ὑπερβολήν, highlighting Herod's excessive anger because of the youths' statements during the interrogation: "Because of his excessive anger about these responses he got the better of his illness and started an assembly. He denounced the men at great length as sacrilegious because, by using the law as a pretext, they were attempting something more ambitious, and he insisted that they be punished for sacrilege." (1.654, trans. Forte/Sievers).³⁴ The image of Herod as a tyrant becomes very explicit in a flashback in *The Jewish War* about the Jewish petitioners to Augustus who pleaded for Archelaus' deposition. They characterize the former king as "the most cruel tyrant ever" (τῶν πώποτε

for Gaius mentioned in *A.ḡ.* 19.261 and the contempt for human and divine matters because of the corruption of power in *A.ḡ.* 6.262–268.

³³ Van Henten, *Maccabean Martyrs*, 105–8.

³⁴ *B.ḡ.* 2.87 also associates Herod with tyranny. I warmly thank Antony Forte and Joseph Sievers, co-contributors to the Brill Josephus project, for allowing me to use their still unpublished translation of *Jewish War* book 1.

τυραννησάντων ὁμότατον ἐννοχέναι τύραννον, *B.ḡ.* 2.84) and Archelaus as "the son of such a tyrant" (τὸν τηλικούτου τυράννου παῖδα, 2.88).

In the *Antiquities*, Josephus calls the two sages who instigate the destruction of the eagle interpreters of the ancestral laws (ἐξηγηταὶ τῶν πατρίων νόμων, *A.ḡ.* 17.149).³⁵ The noun ἐξηγηταί is missing in the *Jewish War*,³⁶ which consistently uses σοφιστής in its references to Judas and Matthias (1.648, 650, 655, 656; also *A.ḡ.* 17.152, 155).³⁷ Σοφιστής is mostly used to indicate important sages or heads of a religious and/or political school.³⁸ Sometimes the word is pejorative, meaning "sophist, charlatan, demagogue" (e.g. *C. Ap.* 2.236).³⁹ In contrast, Josephus' introduction characterizes Herod as a tyrant and the two sages as highly respected and learned members of the people. This is underpinned by semantic fields that induce readers to interpret Herod and the sages with their followers as each other's opposite. The sages and/or their followers strive for virtue (ἀρετή, *A.ḡ.* 17.149, 152, 158) and piety (εὐσέβεια, 17.150; cf. 159), Herod obviously not. The sages educate the young to live a virtuous life (17.149; cf. 2 Macc. 6:24–28), and not only to remain faithful to the laws, but also to consider their cause as being entrusted to them by God (τοῦ τε γὰρ θεοῦ τῇ ἀξιώσει πεπιστευμένα, 158). Herod's tyrannical behavior results in bold transgressions of the Jewish laws: "... For, it certainly was because of his boldness (τόλμα) to construct these things against the law's prohibition..." (17.150). In fact, Herod, the sages, and their group are also contrasted with each other in their attitude towards the ancestral laws. In their statement to Herod in the interrogation the youths say: "It is not at all surprising if we consider the preservation of the laws, which Moses has left behind

³⁵ K. H. Rengstorff, *A Complete Concordance to Flavius Josephus* (4 vols; Leiden: Brill, 1973–1983), 2: s.v., 122: "expounder, interpreter," the noun occurs three times in Josephus, only in the *Antiquities* and always referring to the two sages (17.147, 214, 216). The noun ἐξηγησις occurs more frequently and can indicate dream interpretation (*A.ḡ.* 2.69, 75, 77, 93) or explanation of laws (*A.ḡ.* 11.192).

³⁶ Once the *Jewish War* uses the verb ἐξηγέομαι in the eagle episode in connection with the sages (1.649). See also *B.ḡ.* 2.113 and *A.ḡ.* 17.347 about dream interpretation and *A.ḡ.* 18.81 (laws of Moses).

³⁷ Cf. *B.ḡ.* 2.10, 118, 433, 445.

³⁸ O. Michel & O. Bauernfeind, *Flavius Josephus, De bello judaico: der jüdische Krieg: Griechisch und Deutsch* (vols 1–3.2; München: Kösel-Verlag, 1962–1969), 1:425. Rengstorff, *Concordance*, s.v. σοφιστής, 4:28–29.

³⁹ *C. Ap.* 2.236: "For all that, the Lysimachuses and Molons and other writers of that class, reprobate sophists and deceivers of youth (ἄδοκίμοι σοφισταί, μερακίῶν ἀπατεῶνες...) (trans. Thackeray).

in writing after the council, and the instruction of the divinity to be more important than your decrees.” (A.ḡ. 17.159).⁴⁰ Faithfulness to the ancestral laws (οἱ πατέριοι νόμοι) is highlighted in the story (A.ḡ. 17.149, 150, 151, 152 and 159; just once in the parallel narrative, B.ḡ. 1.653). The opposition of Jewish ancestral laws, identical with the laws of Moses, and Herod’s decrees (δόγματα) in 17.159 even suggests that Herod treated his subjects as a foreign ruler.⁴¹ This contrast echoes the stories in Daniel 3 and 6 as well as the martyr stories in 2 and 4 Maccabees (cf. 2 Macc. 7:30), which oppose the foreign ruler’s laws and God’s laws or authority.⁴²

The opposition of Herod and the sages with their followers, therefore, appears to be an important narrative thread. Yet, in the margin Josephus seems to deconstruct this presentation of the antagonists with small remarks. The sages and the perpetrators are both held responsible for a bold act, at least from the perspective of the king’s representative⁴³ who arrested them: “He attacked them when they did not expect it. As a crowd loves to do *they had undertaken this bold act* (τετολμηκόσιν) more out of a whimsical idea than by cautious foresight . . . He also caught *the instigators of the bold act* (τοὺς εἰσηγητὰς τοῦ τολμήματος), Judas and Matthias, who considered it shameful to flee his onslaught.” (17.156–157, my emphasis). The Greek words indicating these bold acts, *τολμάω* and *τόλμημα* (cf. *τολμάω* in 17.158 and *τόλμα* in 17.160) are ambiguous. In the golden eagle section *τόλμα* has a negative meaning at least once; in 17.150 it refers to Herod’s bold transgression of the laws by his building activities (above). The parallel narrative in *The Jewish War* uses *τόλμα* or related phrases only once in 1.653 in the youths’ dialogue with Herod (cf. A.ḡ.

⁴⁰ In the parallel narrative in *The Jewish War* the youths explicitly refer to ὁ πατέριος νόμος: “First [the king] asked whether they had dared to cut down the golden eagle. They admitted to it. When (he asked) who it was who ordered this, they responded that their ancestral law (did).” (B.ḡ. 1.653; trans. Forte/Sievers).

⁴¹ Cf. B.ḡ. 2.86.

⁴² Van Henten, *Maccabean Martyrs*, 10–14.

⁴³ O. Michel and O. Bauernfeind, *Flavius Josephus, De bello judaico*, 1:425, assume that the title ὁ στρατηγός τοῦ βασιλέως in 17.156 (cf. 17.209–210, probably referring to the same officer) refers to the manager of the temple, responsible for the order in the temple area, and one rank below the high priest (Acts 4:1; 5:24). W. Otto, “Herodes,” *PRE* 8 Suppl. 2, 1–158, esp. 59–60, and Schalit, *König Herodes*, 218, argue that this officer was the representative of the king in the city, who controlled the administration of a toparchy and was also responsible for maintaining the order. The king’s στρατηγός, in Jerusalem, may also have been the governor of Judaea and perhaps Idumaea.

17.158). Another note in the margin that runs counter to the youths' positive image is that during their arrest they were disorganized and behaved stupidly, in the manner typical of a crowd (17.156). Finally, the continuation of the narrative, dealing with Archelaus' reign, associates the two sages openly with rebellion (στασιάζω, 17.214–216), which obviously matches Herod's view of the case as presented by the narrative.⁴⁴

2. *The Eagle as Pièce de Résistance*

The big, golden eagle was apparently the *pièce de résistance* for the sages and their followers (*AJ.* 17.151, 206; *BJ.* 1.650–653; 2.6). Why did sages and followers object to the eagle so much that they decided to risk their lives by taking it away? One motive is explicit in Josephus' report: the eagle was considered a violation of the second commandment, and, therefore, a severe transgression of Jewish law. Two other motives, not explicit in the text, may have been a factor as well, namely the eagle's location and its symbolic meaning.

Josephus calls the eagle an *ἀνάθημα* (*AJ.* 17.151), which can mean something set up in a temple as a votive-offering or an ornament.⁴⁵ The eagle as a votive-offering is highly improbable in a Jewish context. It is also improbable that the eagle was just for decoration, because it was located at a prominent place and was a well-known symbol of power in various contexts, not only in the Greco-Roman world,⁴⁶ but also in the Ancient Near East. Interpreting the eagle as a symbol of loyalty to Rome is, therefore, far from obvious. Pre-Islamic Arabic inscriptions from the biblical times onward attest the veneration of the eagle deity *nsr/nsur* throughout the Arabic peninsula.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ The introduction of the version in *The Jewish War* includes the noun ἐπανάστασις “insurrection” (1.648), *LSJ* 608 sv I,3, the parallel version the related verb ἐπανίσταμαι “rise up against” (*AJ.* 17.148).

⁴⁵ *LSJ* sv 105; Rengstorff, *Concordance*, s.v. ἀνάθημα, 1:91, does not offer the meaning “ornament.”

⁴⁶ Eagles also appear in Greek religious representations: Heracles' statue in his temple in Olympia, for example, had a scepter in the left hand of the god, ornamented with every kind of metal, and an eagle sitting on the scepter (Pausanias 5.11.1). Two pillars before the sanctuary of Zeus on Mount Lycaeus in Arcadia had gilded eagles on them (Pausanias 8.38.7). See below for Roman references.

⁴⁷ B. Becking “Eagle,” *DDD* 271–2. About the eagle in the Hebrew Bible see Becking, l.c., and D. Vogel, “Ambiguities of the Eagle,” *JBQ* 26 (1998): 85–92.

The eagle was an important astral and solar symbol in the Ancient Near East,⁴⁸ and visual traditions of this eagle symbolism have been incorporated in Jewish art. In Late Antiquity, Jews in the Galilee and the Golan must have been familiar, for example, with eagles as decoration on the lintel above synagogue entrances or on Torah shrines or arches.⁴⁹ Sarcophagi from Beth Shearim as well as the arch of the Beth Shearim mausoleum show carved eagles.⁵⁰ Yet, there are two complications for using these archaeological remains to establish the symbolic meaning of the eagle in Herod's temple. Not only are all of these sources late (they date from the third century C.E. onwards), with the exception of a Herodian type of coin, but the content of the eagle's symbolic meaning is not very obvious. Goodenough's extensive discussion of the eagle motif in Jewish art builds on non-Jewish parallels like the eagle as *psychopompus*, i.e. transporter of souls of the deceased to heaven. He suggests three different symbolic meanings for the eagle in Jewish contexts: a symbol of the king on his throne, a symbol of God or God's intervention, and a symbolic indication of immortality.⁵¹ Avi-Yonah and Hachlili, however, assume that the eagle motif was just ornamental and devoid of a symbolic meaning.⁵² Some of the archeological remains from the Diaspora, however, are chronologically closer to the eagle in Herod's temple and suggest a symbolic meaning that would fit this eagle's function better.

⁴⁸ E. R. Goodenough, *Jewish symbols in the Greco-Roman period* (13 vols.; New York: Pantheon Books, 1953–1968), 8:125–31.

⁴⁹ Lintels of Gush Halav, Safed, Dabbura, Japhia, Horvat Weradim, Kasbieh, and Capernaum synagogues, R. Hachlili, *Ancient Jewish Art and Archaeology in the Land of Israel* (Handbuch der Orientalistik 7th series 1.2; Leiden: Brill, 1988), 206–8; 332, with references. Torah shrine ornamentation on a double column from Umm el-Kanatir and a stone relief from 'En Samsam, Hachlili, *Ancient Jewish Art and Archaeology in the Land of Israel*, 333 with Plates 23 and 26.

⁵⁰ N. Avigad, *Beth She'arim. Report on the Excavations during 1953–1958: Catacombs 12–23* (vol. 3; Jerusalem: Massada Press, 1976), 141–2 with Plates xli:1 and xlii:2; Hachlili, *Ancient Jewish Art and Archaeology in the Land of Israel*, 328–30; 333.

⁵¹ Goodenough, *Jewish symbols*, 8:121–42, esp. 136. A recent interpretation takes the eagle as a symbol of divine presence and protection: P. Szkolot, "The Eagle as the Symbol of Divine Presence and Protection in Ancient Jewish Art," *Studia Judaica* 5 (2002): 1–11.

⁵² M. Avi-Yonah, *Art in Ancient Palestine: Selected Studies* (collected and prepared for republication by H. Katzenstein and Y. Tsafir; Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1981), 65; Hachlili, *Ancient Jewish Art and Archaeology in the Land of Israel*, 334. Hachlili, 346, explains the prominence of the eagle in (late) Ancient Jewish sources with a reference to *Midrash Exodus Rabba* 23:13, which associates the eagle as the most exalted bird with greatness and royalty, as well as nearness to God, being located under God's chariot.

In the ancient Sardis synagogue stood a large stone table with big eagles in relief on its supporting stones. This table probably dates from the late Hellenistic or early Roman Imperial period. It was located in the center of the synagogue, toward the western end of the hall, probably the location where the Torah reading took place. Next to the table stood two stone pairs of lions.⁵³ We can only speculate about the original non-Jewish function of this table, but the combination with lions in its synagogue context may be a clue to the eagle as symbol of the ruler's power in a Jewish context. Representations of the eagle in the third-century C.E. Dura Europos synagogue also suggest that the eagle was a symbol of royal power. One of the center panels of the wall paintings in this synagogue represents a musician playing a lyre. A large yellow eagle perches on the rail of the throne behind his back.⁵⁴ Most scholars assume that this figure can be identified as David-Orpheus.⁵⁵ The interpretation of the eagle as a symbol of royal power is even more obvious in a heavily damaged painting of the panel on the western wall (register A), which depicts a king, perhaps Solomon,⁵⁶ sitting on a throne with a six-step dais. This dais is still clearly visible, and it shows crouching lions and eagles confronting each other at the ends of its steps in an alternating pattern.⁵⁷ On the western wall (register C 2), king Ahasverus has been painted, seated on a similar throne with a five-step dais with crouching lions and eagles, but this dais has pairs of eagles at the end of the first and last steps and pairs of lions on the others, the throne itself is flanked by two lions.⁵⁸

⁵³ Description, plate and reference in R. Hachlili, *Ancient Jewish Art and Archaeology in the Diaspora* (Handbuch der Orientalistik 1/35; Leiden: Brill, 1998), 82–3; 230; also L. I. Levine, *The Ancient Synagogue: The First Thousand Years* (Yale University Press, 2000), 245–7; 278; 589.

⁵⁴ Hachlili, *Ancient Jewish Art and Archaeology in the Diaspora*, 110–11; 179 with figure III–9.

⁵⁵ Hachlili, *Ancient Jewish Art and Archaeology in the Diaspora*, 247–9 with references.

⁵⁶ Hachlili, *Ancient Jewish Art and Archaeology in the Diaspora*, 166, argues that this was an intentional adaptation of Solomon's throne as described in 1 Kings 10:18–20.

⁵⁷ Hachlili, *Ancient Jewish Art and Archaeology in the Diaspora*, 114 with figure III–45b and plate III–8.

⁵⁸ Hachlili, *Ancient Jewish Art and Archaeology in the Diaspora*, 146–7 and 166–7 with figure III–45a. A synagogue chancel screen from Horvat Susiya has a menorah and a tree of life surrounded by heraldic lions as well as a palm tree surrounded by eagles, S. Gutman, Z. Yeivin and E. Netzer, "Excavations in the Synagogue at Horvat Susiya," in *Ancient Synagogues Revealed* (ed. L. I. Levine; Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1981), 123–128, esp. 125; Hachlili, *Ancient Jewish Art and Archaeology in the Land of Israel*, 189 and 221 with Plate 26.

The depiction of these royal thrones with a dais in the Dura Europos synagogue has probably been taken over from non-Jewish artwork.⁵⁹ In fact, the eagle has been used as a symbol of the ruler's power in various ancient contexts from the Persian period onward. Several sources report that Cyrus and later Persian kings used a golden eagle as their ensign, the eagle was either sitting with outstretched wings on a lance, or depicted on the shield.⁶⁰ Ptolemaic kings likewise used the eagle as a symbol of their power. Athenaeus' description of the pavilion in the citadel of Ptolemy Philadelphus in Alexandria mentions golden eagles facing each other along the top-most space of the ceiling, being fifteen cubits in length (Athenaeus, *Deipn.* 5.126a). From the entire period of Ptolemaic rule from Ptolemy I up to Cleopatra VII, various types of Ptolemaic coins had the ruler's portrait on one side and the eagle, sometimes holding a thunderbolt, on the other.⁶¹ Herod's enemy Cleopatra, for example, had a silver drachma in 47/46 B.C.E. issued in this fashion by the mint of Alexandria as well as bronze eighty and forty drachma coins between 51 and 30 B.C.E.⁶² Two silver tetradrachmas issued by Ascalon in 50/49 and 39/38 B.C.E. respectively follow this Ptolemaic tradition and present Cleopatra VII's portrait on the obverse and the eagle on the reverse.⁶³

In Roman contexts, the eagle could symbolize the highest god, Jupiter-Zeus, and express in this capacity Jupiter's role as protector of the army. This function forms the background for the eagle on the Roman standards.⁶⁴ The eagle's function as symbol of the supreme god or the ruler in which the deity's power could become manifest

⁵⁹ A relief from Dura Europos in the Temple of Gad with an inscription dated 159 C.E. depicts Gad of Dura as Zeus/Baalshamin, a bearded male figure, seated on a throne flanked by eagles. S. B. Downey, *The Excavations at Dura-Europos: The Stone and Plaster Sculpture* (Final Report, vol. 3; part 1.2; Los Angeles: The Institute of Archaeology, 1977), 14–17 with figure 4 and 208–9; Hachlili, *Ancient Jewish Art and Archaeology in the Diaspora*, 167.

⁶⁰ Xenophon, *Cyr.* 7.1.4; Flavius Arrianus, *Parthicorum fragmenta* 98; *FGrH* 2b, 156 Frag. 156; Xenophon, *Anab.* 1.10.12; Philostratus, *Imag.* 2.31.

⁶¹ S. Walker and P. Higgs, eds., *Cleopatra of Egypt from History to Myth* (London: The British Museum Press, 2001), nos. 67, 74, 76, 82, 90–91, and 177–185.

⁶² References: A. Meadows in Walker and Higgs, *Cleopatra of Egypt from History to Myth*, 177–8 with nos. 177–185.

⁶³ A. Meadows in Walker and Higgs, *Cleopatra of Egypt from History to Myth*, 234 with references (nos. 219–220).

⁶⁴ Y. le Bohec, "Feldzeichen," *Der Neue Pauly* 4:458–62; T. Schneider and E. Stemmlinger, "Adler," *RAC* 1:87–93, esp. 88 with references.

may explain the presence of the eagle on the ceremonial dress of consuls at their inauguration or the gala dress of emperors.⁶⁵ A gold coin from 27 B.C.E. indicates Augustus' new status after his victory at Actium. The reverse of this coin shows the eagle of Jupiter with Augustus' oak-wreath crown in its talons, and two laurel-branches behind it.⁶⁶

The Herodians clearly had no difficulty in minting coins with their own portrait and/or animal images and, in fact, one type of Herod the Great's undated coins depicts a standing eagle on its reverse. The obverse has a single *cornucopia* and an inscription referring to King Herod (ΒΑΣΙΛΑ/ΗΡΩ[Δ]).⁶⁷ Meshorer argues that the eagle on these coins refers to Herod's embellishment of the temple exemplified by the eagle on the sanctuary's entrance, as well as to Rome as the source of his power.⁶⁸ However, it seems more plausible to interpret the eagle in the context of the coins of contemporary rulers.⁶⁹ With this coin, Herod, therefore, probably followed a well-established tradition, illustrated by, among other things, coins from his arch-enemy Cleopatra VII as well as from his later benefactor Augustus.

Thus, in the light of Jewish visual sources in the Diaspora and in non-Jewish traditions, Herod's eagle may be interpreted as a symbol of the king's power and perhaps his benefactions. The temple itself was an obvious demonstration of such benefactions, as Herod himself indicates during the meeting in Jericho following upon the eagle incident (*A.Ĵ.* 17.162–3). Such a function, glorifying Herod's rule, may have been associated with Jewish traditions about the eagle, such as the well-known image of the eagle spreading its wings over its nest as a symbol of God's protection of the people of Israel (*Deut.* 32:11). Schalit suggests that this biblical imagery may have been applied to rulers.⁷⁰ Yet, Schalit also argues, with Meshorer, that the

⁶⁵ Schneider and Stempler, "Adler," 89.

⁶⁶ J. Williams, in Walker and Higgs, *Cleopatra of Egypt from History to Myth*, 259 no. 301.

⁶⁷ Y. Meshorer, *Ancient Jewish Coinage* (2 vols.; Dix Hills, New York: Amphora Books, 1982), 2:29–30 no. 23 (and 23a–c as coins belonging to this type); Hachlili, *Ancient Jewish Art and Archaeology in the Land of Israel*, 81.

⁶⁸ Meshorer, *Ancient Jewish Coinage*, 2:29. See also footnote 69.

⁶⁹ Y. Meshorer, *A Treasury of Jewish Coins From the Persian Period to Bar Kokhba* (Jerusalem/Nyack, NY: Yad Ben-Zvi Press/Amphora Books, 2001), 69–69, notes the similarity of Herod's eagle coins with Ptolemaic and Seleucid coins as well as the Tyrian sheqels with an image of an eagle and suggests that the Jewish masses may have interpreted the eagle on the temple as a symbol of God's power.

⁷⁰ Cf. Schalit, *König Herodes*, 734, who refers in this connection to a statement by

eagle was a demonstration of Herod's loyalty to Rome. In his opinion, emperors and soldiers alike must have interpreted the eagle, at such a conspicuous place in the temple, as a tribute to the *imperium romanum*.⁷¹

It is certainly possible that the eagle functioned as a symbol of Herod's loyalty to Rome although one wonders how many Romans may have seen the eagle. However, this reading is not supported by details in Josephus' text. There is no hint that the two sages were furious about Herod's loyalty to Rome. The narrative does mention two other things, first, that Herod had disqualified himself as king because of his transgressions of the law (above), which implies that the eagle as a symbol of the ruler's power would be particularly offensive, and secondly, that the eagle was a violation of the second commandment. Associations of Herod's eagle in the temple with Deut. 32:11 would only have fuelled such criticism, because the symbolism would presuppose in this connection that Herod took over God's role according to the biblical passage.

The remark that introduces Josephus' explanation of the golden eagle as a transgression of Jewish law "But the law forbids those who intend to live in accordance with it . . ." presents Judaism as a way of life (*A. J.* 17.151). Similar introductory phrases including the verb *κωλύω* plus *ὁ νόμος* usually imply a ban in Jewish law based on the written Torah.⁷² The ban referred to in *A. J.* 17.151 concerns the construction of statues (*εἰκόνων τε ἀναστάσεις*) as well as the setting up of images of any living creatures (*τινῶν ζώων ἀναθέσεις*) in public. The passage lacks an explicit quotation, but it is obvious that it concerns a paraphrase of the second commandment (Exod 20:4;

R. Aqiva in Yalkut Shimoni Jethro 19, fol. 84b 276. Schalit also associates the role of the eagle in connection to returning the chosen their homeland.

⁷¹ Schalit, *König Herodes*, 734.

⁷² Similar formulae in *A. J.* 3.236 (referring to the prohibition of Lev 22:27–30); 9.74–75 (paraphrasing 2 Kings 7:3–4 and hinting at Lev 13:45–46 while calling this prohibition a Samaritan law); 12.187 (implying a prohibition of mixed marriages, probably building on Neh 13:23–31; Ezra 9:1–2; 10:6–44; cf. also *A. J.* 18.345), 12.206 (referring to a Jewish prohibition made up by the Tobiad Hyrcanus); 14.167 (implying that Herod violated the sixth commandment), and *Vita* 161 (implying the prohibition to work on the Shabbat). Related formulae in *C. Ap.* 1.67 and 2.267 concern Tyrian and Athenian laws. The formula is not based on vocabulary in the Hebrew Bible, and the Septuagint has only one passage combining *κωλύω* with *βιβλία*, referring to Antiochus IV's prohibition of Jewish sacrifices, Shabbat observance, Jewish festivals and circumcision as well as his order to move over to Greek customs (1 Macc 1:44–50).

Deut 4:16; Josephus, *A.J.* 3.91).⁷³ The second commandment is taken in a strict way, possibly because there was disagreement about its interpretation. Not all ancient Jews took offence at images of living creatures in public. Archaeological sources like the wall paintings from the Dura Europos synagogue show that figural decorations were fully acceptable for at least part of the Diaspora Jews. Additionally, remains from, and references to, Judea dating from the early Second Temple period or earlier show that figural representations were not unusual. They include Yehud coins minted in Jerusalem with representations of animals, including the eagle.⁷⁴ During the Hasmonean era it became more common to consider images of living creatures a violation of the second commandment. The second half of the second C.E. shows a come back of figural art in the funerary context of the Beth-Shearim cemetery, followed, among other things, by figurative motifs on synagogue mosaic floors.⁷⁵ Yet, even in the 'iconoclastic' period of about 150 B.C.E. until about 150 C.E. there were exceptions, the Herodians especially used figural motifs in decorations and on coins. Herod the Great, Philip and Agrippa I used them on coins and Herod Antipas had decorations including living creatures in his palace in Tiberias (below). There are even a few specimens of images of animals, fish and birds, from the Jewish quarter of Jerusalem in the Herodian period.⁷⁶ This implies that Judean Jews in the first century C.E. were divided about the tolerance of images of living beings.⁷⁷ Apparently, the image of the eagle was only offensive to some of the Judean Jews, including Josephus himself. His strict interpretation of the second commandment excluded all images of living creatures, at least in the context of the Holy City.

⁷³ Cf. Josephus' paraphrase of this commandment in *C. Ap.* 2.190–191. For Jewish receptions of the ten commandments see B.-Z. Segal and G. Levi, *The Ten Commandments in History and Tradition* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1985).

⁷⁴ References in Levine, *Ancient Synagogue*, 208–9.

⁷⁵ Levine, *Ancient Synagogue*, 103, 208–210. Cf. Hachlili, *Ancient Jewish Art and Archaeology in the Diaspora*, 238 and 382, who argues that some of the figurative symbols, e.g. lions and eagles, had a vague symbolic meaning, but that most of them had only an ornamental function.

⁷⁶ Josephus, *Vita* 65–66. N. Avigad, *Discovering Jerusalem* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1984), 150, 169. Levine, *Ancient Synagogue*, 210 n. 47. For the coins of Philip (4 B.C.E.–34 C.E.) with portraits of Augustus or Tiberius, or with his own portrait, as well as coins of Agrippa I see Meshorer, *Ancient Jewish Coinage*, 2:29, 2:44–46, 2:60–61.

⁷⁷ Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols*, 8:124, assumes that the majority of the Jews accepted the symbol of the eagle on Herod's coins as well as on the temple.

Two other episodes in Josephus also imply a strict interpretation of the second commandment, taking the fabrication of images (εἰκόνες) of living creatures as a severe violation of Jewish law, which had to be countered. Pilate's decision to move Roman standards with busts of the emperor over to Jerusalem was taken as a matter of life and death by the Jerusalemites (below). Josephus himself agreed to execute the demolition of Herod the tetrarch's palace in Tiberias because it had figures of living creatures (ζώων μορφὰς ἔχοντα), but Jesus son of Sapphias got there first (*Life* 65–67).⁷⁸

Finally, the eagle's location may also have triggered the rebels' act. Josephus' description suggests that the eagle was located on top of the great gateway, i.e. the broad porch that gave access to the sanctuary itself. This means that the eagle must have been clearly visible for those within the court of the Israelites and the priestly court as long as they were not standing too close to the sanctuary's walls.⁷⁹ The location of the eagle by King Herod this close to the Holy of Holies could easily be interpreted as an enormous provocation. In fact, the protest against Pilate's transfer of Roman standards with busts of the emperor from Caesarea to Jerusalem was also considered a provocation and a violation of Jewish law. By their faithfulness to the Jewish laws and their willingness to die for them, the Jerusalemites persuaded Pilate to return the standards to Caesarea (*B.J.* 2.169–174; *A.J.* 18.55–59). The parallel passage in the *Jewish War* suggests that Jewish law forbade the erection of any kind of sculpted creature (οὐδὲν . . . δείκην τῖθесθαι) in *Jerusalem* (2.170), which suggests that the presence of images of living beings could not be tolerated in any case in the Holy City of Jerusalem.⁸⁰

3. Other Motivations for the Eagle's Demolition

The sages' encouragement and the youngsters' responses to the king, including noble death rhetoric, present the demolition of the eagle

⁷⁸ S. Mason, *Life of Josephus. Flavius Josephus: Translation and Commentary* (ed. S. Mason; vol. 9, Leiden: Brill, 2001), 59.

⁷⁹ Hachlili, *Ancient Jewish Art and Archaeology in the Land of Israel*, 27; Schalit, *König Herodes*, 396–7.

⁸⁰ The passage about the prohibition to fabricate images of living creatures in *The Jewish War* contains also a geographical marker: “for it was unlawful for the temple (κατὰ τὸν ναόν) to contain either images or busts or a work representing some living creature” (1.650, trans. Forte-Sievers, my emphasis).

as a self-sacrifice on behalf of the ancestral laws and piety. This has a double reward: eternal glory and a happy afterlife. As indicated above, Herod and the sages with their youthful followers are contrasted by their opposite attitudes to the ancestral laws. Herod is characterized as a transgressor of these laws (*A.J.* 17.150, 159), while the sages and the youths remain faithful to them at the cost of their lives (17.149, 150, 151, 152 and 159). The willingness to die for the Jewish ancestral (and God's) laws, reminds one of the noble death of the Maccabean martyrs who did not give in to Antiochus IV's orders.⁸¹ The eagle's destruction is also characterized as a deed of piety. The two sages describe the act in athletic terms as "carry(-ing) away prizes for their piety in accordance with the laws" (*A.J.* 17.150). Josephus' combination of εὐσέβεια, ἀγωνίσματα and νομῶν in this passage is rare and perhaps unique in Greek literature up to the third century C.E. However, the application of athletic metaphors in Jewish religious contexts does occur in other Hellenistic-Jewish writings that are heavily influenced by Greek culture, like Philo's writings and 4 Maccabees. Philo frequently uses athletic imagery in order to express how εὐσέβεια "piety" was put into practice, for instance, by the Levites who executed God's punishment for the Golden Calf as described in Ex. 32 (τοὺς ὑπὲρ εὐσεβείας ἀγῶνας διαθλήσαντες, *Spec.* 1.79) or by the priests who fulfilled their duties (γέρας ἀγώνων, οὓς ὑπὲρ εὐσεβείας ἀθλοῦσιν, *Spec.* 2.183; also *Virt.* 45 (τὸν ὑπὲρ εὐσεβείας ἀγῶνα). The closest parallel to Josephus' phrase in *A.J.* 17.150 is a passage about the tabernacle in Philo's *Life of Moses* (*Vit. Mos.* 2.136). It reports that the women brought carefully produced utensils for the tabernacle's washbasin. By doing this they competed in piety with the men and thought that they would carry away a beautiful prize because of their contribution (. . . ἀμιλλώμενοι τοῖς ἀνδράσι πρὸς εὐσέβειαν, ἀγώνισμα καλὸν ἄρασθαι διανοηθεῖσαι).⁸² The vocabulary in 4 Maccabees also combines εὐσέβεια

⁸¹ Van Henten, *Maccabean Martyrs*, 125–269. Faithfulness to the ancestral laws and/or practices is also an important motive in *B.J.* 2.170–171, 174; *A.J.* 18.59 (context: Pilate's provocations, *B.J.* 2.169–177; *A.J.* 18.55–62); *B.J.* 2.192, 196; *A.J.* 18.263, 266, 270 (context: Gaius' statue, *B.J.* 2.184–203; *A.J.* 18.261–288); *C. Ap.* 1.42–43: every Jew dies gladly (ἡδέως), if necessary, for the laws. See also *C. Ap.* 2.146, 218–219, 225–235; cf. 2.293–294 and 1.191.

⁸² Similar imagery in early Christian passages: Clemens Alexandrinus, *Strom.* 2.18.84; Origenes, *Contra Celsum* 3.8; 8.70; *Exhortatio ad martyrium* 5; 23; *Enarrationes in Job*, PG 17, 61D.

“piety” with athletic imagery. It is less similar to Josephus’ *A. J.* 17.150, but its context, the martyrs’ noble death for εὐσέβεια, is rather similar to the self-sacrifice of the eagle’s destructors in Josephus.⁸³

There is another passage in the eagle episode, a very difficult one, that is relevant for εὐσέβεια as motive for the youths’ deed. In *A. J.* 17.159 the young men state to the king: “We will gladly endure death and every punishment you lay upon us, for it is not because of unrighteous deeds but out of love of what is pious [or, the pious one]⁸⁴ that we are bound to have thorough knowledge of what living with it [him?] means.” The phrase φιλεῖ τοῦ εὐσεβοῦς is ambiguous, because τοῦ εὐσεβοῦς could either indicate a pious person or something pious, as my literal translation shows. Unfortunately, another phrase further on in the same sentence, ἐφομιλήσαν αὐτοῦ, is also ambiguous, because the αὐτοῦ that modifies the rare verbal form ἐφομιλήσαν⁸⁵ can be taken as a masculine or a neuter form, and therefore refer to a person or a matter. A possible interpretation of this second phrase is to take the αὐτοῦ as referring to εὐσεβοῦς mentioned before, although there is hardly evidence that word combinations of ὁμιλία/ὁμιλές and εὐσέβεια/εὐσεβής were common.⁸⁶ If εὐσεβοῦς in the passage would indicate a person, the continuation of the sentence would suggest a close relationship with this person, which would only make sense in the context if this person would be God.⁸⁷ However, God is not referred to in the immediate context,

⁸³ For athletic metaphors in 4 Maccabees, see van Henten, *Maccabean Martyrs*, 121–2; 235–8.

⁸⁴ Marcus/Wikren translate “piety”.

⁸⁵ *LSJ* 746 s.v. ἐφομιλέω mentions a dubious reference in Hermesianax 7.51 (fourth/third century B.C.E.) and Nonnus, *Dion.* 5.410 (fourth/fifth century C.E.). See also Nonnus, *Dion.* 24.335.

⁸⁶ An isolated line in one of Aeschylus’ fragments refers to a “pious communion” (εὐσεβῆς ὁμιλία) (*Fragmenta* 67 [229]).

⁸⁷ In his refutation of Celsus’ view that the animals, being irrational, are closer to God than humans, Origen uses the phrase ἡ θεῖα ὁμιλία (“the society of God”): “And wholly false, too, is his assertion, that ‘the irrational animals are nearer the society of God (τῆς θείας ὁμιλίας εἶναι τὰ ἄλογα ζῶα) (than men),’ when even men who are still in a state of wickedness, however great their progress in knowledge, are far removed from that society (πόρρω εἰσὶ τῆς θείας ὁμιλίας). It is, then, those alone who are truly wise and sincerely religious who are nearer to God’s society (κατὰ ἀλήθειαν σοφοὶ καὶ ἀνευδῶς εὐσεβεῖς ἐγγυτέρω τῆς θείας ὁμιλίας εἰσὶν); such persons as were our prophets, and Moses, to the latter of whom, on account of his exceeding purity, the Scripture said: ‘Moses alone shall come near the LORD, but the rest shall not come nigh.’” (*Contra Celsum* 4.96.16–17, trans. Roberts-Donaldson; see also *Philocalia* 20.23).

and the passage focuses upon the proper attitude to God, implying piety as a virtue. The only remaining option is to take the αὐτοῦ as a reference to τὸν θάνατον, which implies a paradox, i.e. living with death, but this may be taken ironically or as a hint at the posthumous reward for the perpetrators.⁸⁸ This reading also fits in with the continuation of the narrative.

Conventional Greco-Roman noble death rhetoric is found in the sages' incitement in *A.Ĵ.* 17.152 (cf. *B.Ĵ.* 1.650): "For, (they said), even if they ran the risk of getting the death penalty that would be reserved for them (εἰ τις γένοιτο κίνδυνος τῷ εἰς θάνατον ἀνακειμένῳ), the virtue gained by death would appear much more beneficial than the pleasure of life (τῆς ἐν τῷ ζῆν ἡδονῆς) for those about to die for the safety and the preservation of their ancestral customs." Dying nobly for the ancestral laws brings virtue and fame, which is, of course, a *topos* frequently articulated in Greek literature.⁸⁹ Josephus was well aware of this motif.⁹⁰ This passage concerns a particular voluntary statement, which builds on Greek traditions, expressing a decision to die when a violent death could be avoided in the form of "rather X noble death than Y shameful way of living on". Several noble death passages in Josephus include such a statement about a voluntary death.⁹¹ A most famous forerunner, echoed many times in later sources, is Plato's elaboration of Socrates's voluntary death in the *Apology*.⁹² Plato elaborates Socrates' determination to remain

⁸⁸ A passage in Eleazar ben Yair's Masada second speech presupposes the immortality of the soul and suggests that death is a liberating event for the soul, which can leave the misery of its existence in the mortal body (Josephus, *B.Ĵ.* 7.344). H. C. C. Cavallin, *Life after Death: Paul's Argument for the Resurrection of the Dead in 1 Cor. 15, Part I: An Enquiry into the Jewish Background* (Lund: Gleerup, 1974), 143–4.

⁸⁹ To give just a few examples: Heraclitus, *Fragm.* 44, H. Diels, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker Griechisch und Deutsch* (3 vols.; Berlin: Weidmann, 1951–1956), 1:160; Plato, *Apol.* 32b–d; Lycurgus, *Contra Leocr.* 106–107. Herodotus 7.228, Lycurgus, *Contra Leocr.* 109 (with adaptations), and Cicero, *Tusc. disp.* 1.101, transmit the famous epigram by Simonides for Leonidas and his 300 Spartiates, who fell at Thermopylae in 480 B.C.E. (*Anthologia Graeca* 7.249):

Tell Sparta, passer-by, that you saw us lying here,
obeying the sacred laws of our country. (according to Cicero's version)

⁹⁰ Josephus, *C. Ap.* 2.226–228. *A.Ĵ.* 18.210, 278 and 19.181 refer to self-sacrifice for other reasons. See also 2 Macc 6:19. Van Henten, *Maccabean Martyrs*, 97–100.

⁹¹ See, for example, *A.Ĵ.* 18.59 in connection with the emperor's busts attached to military standards, which were brought to Jerusalem by Pilate and *B.Ĵ.* 7.337 about suicide as a noble choice in certain situations, with a hint even at pleasure in the response to Eleazar's first speech at Masada.

⁹² J. W. van Henten and F. Avemarie, *Martyrdom and Noble Death: Selected Texts*

steadfast in preferring death by execution to living on disgracefully (*Apol.* 28b–d). He explains Socrates' behavior with the example of Achilles, who was warned by his mother that he himself would die if he killed Hector but he ignored this advice: "When he heard this, he thought lightly of death and danger, and fearing much more to live on as a coward and leaving his friends unavenged (ὁ δὲ ταῦτ' ἀκούσας τοῦ μὲν θανάτου καὶ τοῦ κινδύνου ὀλιγόρησε, πολὺ δὲ μᾶλλον δείσας τὸ ζῆν κακὸς ὢν καὶ τοῖς φίλοις μὴ τιμωρεῖν) he said: 'May I die immediately',⁹³ 'making the one pay who did me wrong. I do not want to stay here, being laughed at beside the curved ships, a burden to the ground.'"⁹⁴ Plato adds a rhetorical question: "Do you think he gave much heed to death and danger (μὴ αὐτὸν οἶε φροντίσαι θανάτου καὶ κινδύνου;) . . .?" (*Apol.* 28c–d). Taking the danger of death lightly is expressed twice in Plato's passage, and highlighted in the sages' statement in *A. J.* 17.152.

According to Plato's *Apology*, Achilles' preference of death and avenging Patroclus by means of his killing Hector is motivated by a strong urge to avoid shame. Josephus articulates the youngsters' motivation for accepting death as the consequence of their act differently. He connects it with another motif that contrasts pleasure and life: "death would appear much more beneficial than the pleasure of life . . . (πολὺ τῆς ἐν τῷ ζῆν ἡδονῆς λυσιτελεστέραν φαίνεσθαι)" (*A. J.* 17.152). Here again Josephus builds on Greek traditions and vocabulary. Plato points out that a normal path of life would bring more pleasure than pain and would end with a natural death at old age. An unexpected death because of a disease or wounds, on the other hand, was a painful or even violent event (*Tim* 81e). The assumption that life and pleasure should go hand in hand is also apparent from Aristotle's argument. He considers it a natural thing for humans to aim for pleasure in life.⁹⁵ Yet, several Greek authors indicate that there were limits to the combination of life and pleasure, not only

from *Graeco-Roman, Jewish, and Christian Antiquity* (The Context of Early Christianity; London: Routledge, 2002), 12–14; 28–30 with references.

⁹³ This is an allusion to Homer, *Iliad* 18.98.

⁹⁴ This is an allusion to Homer, *Iliad* 18.104.

⁹⁵ Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 1175a. Aristotle, taking life as an essentially good thing (*Eth. Nic.* 1170b1), also argues that neither enduring death for the sake of some sort of pleasure or in order to avoid greater pains nor committing suicide in order to escape from trouble is brave in itself (*Eth. Eud.* 1229b.33), a view that Josephus himself probably endorsed, J. W. van Henten, "Noble Death in Josephus: Just Rhetoric?" (forthcoming).

in their criticism of the “hedonistic” attitude of life of the Epicureans,⁹⁶ but also in military contexts. Polybius points this out several times. He takes Hasdrubal, who died fighting when Fortune had deprived him of all hopes for the future, as a model that indicates that a glorious death on the battlefield is preferable to clinging to life (φιλοζωέω) and living on with disgrace and contempt (Polybius 11.2). A similar reasoning is found in a speech of Publius Scipio: “Since, then, Fortune puts before us the most glorious of rewards, in whichever way the battle is decided, should we not be at once the most mean-spirited and foolish of mankind if we abandon the most glorious alternative, and from a paltry clinging to life (φιλοζωία) deliberately choose the worst of misfortunes? Charge the enemy then with the steady resolve to do one of two things, to conquer or to die! For it is men thus minded who invariably conquer their opponents, since they enter the field with no other hope of life” (Polybius 15.10, trans. E. S. Shuckburgh).⁹⁷

Josephus expresses a similar reasoning in Simon the Hasmonean’s speech of encouragement before the battle against Tryphon in *A.J.* 13.198. Simon refers to the exemplary self-sacrifice of his father and brothers and associates “clinging to life” (φιλοζωία) with contempt of glory.⁹⁸ The motif also occurs in non-military contexts in Josephus. *Antiquities* 15.319 is critical about Herod’s attitude to life in the context of his marriage with the high priest’s daughter and Herod is blamed for living for his own pleasure.⁹⁹ *Antiquities* 17.152 about the destruction of Herod’s eagle seems to build on the motif in a military context; life has to be sacrificed in a situation without prospect, for the sake of honor. The self-sacrifice on the battlefield is transposed to the conflict between ruler and youngsters. The king forces the youngsters, from their perspective, to stand up against his transgression of Jewish law and risk their life for the demolition of the godless symbol of his power.

⁹⁶ Cf. the dialogue between Eleazar and Antiochus IV in 4 Macc 5, which associates the Greek king with Epicurean views, van Henten, *Maccabean Martyrs*, 276.

⁹⁷ Cf. Polybius 30.7.1–8.

⁹⁸ Cf. *A.J.* 12.300 and *B.J.* 3.357 concerning Josephus himself. The noun also occurs in *A.J.* 17.180 in an attempt to explain Herod’s treatment of his relatives, concluding that Herod’s mind brought about nothing human.

⁹⁹ Philo contrasts pleasure and self-control in life frequently, e.g. *Agr.* 98; 100. Cf. *Ebr.* 212 and *Somn.* 2.150, which concern the contemplative and pleasant life in the City of God as humankind’s goal.

In the double reward for the perpetrators, commemoration and afterlife, there is again a correspondence between the rebels' intervention and the fate of the Maccabean martyrs, who refuse to give in to the king's order. In *A.J.* 17.152 Josephus writes: "For, they would arrange an eternal glory of receiving praise: they would leave behind their lives as an ever-lasting memory (ἀειμνημόνευτον καταλιπεῖν τὸν βίον) for being praised by both those who are now alive and by people in the future."¹⁰⁰ Commemoration and praise of the deceased go hand in hand in various noble death passages.¹⁰¹ Commemoration in later times is presupposed, for example, by the annual funeral orations for victims on the battlefield by the state of Athens.¹⁰² The motif of leaving one's life behind as a memory or, perhaps, even a monument, is also expressed in the conclusion of the scribe Eleazar's martyrdom in 2 Macc 6:18–31: "And this person died in this way and left behind his own death, not only for the young ones but also for most others of his people, as an example of the greatest nobility and a distinct memory" (ἰστοῦν τὸν ἑαυτοῦ θάνατον . . . μνημόσυνον ἀρετῆς καταλιπών, 2 Macc 6:31).¹⁰³

In the version in *The Jewish War* Herod also asks the youngsters why they were so cheerful even though they faced execution. They answer him that they would enjoy even greater happiness after death, a hint at their posthumous vindication: "When he further asked them why they were so glad now that they were going to be put to death, they answered that after their death, they would even enjoy much greater bliss." (1.653; trans. Sievers-Forte). In *War* 1.650 the sages already refer to the immortality of the soul as a reward for those who die such a noble death. This articulation of the young men's reward for their noble deed in Greek terms is different from the posthumous vindication of the Maccabean brothers in 2 Maccabees,

¹⁰⁰ The adjective ἀειμνημόνευτος "ever-lasting" is extremely rare in Greek literature from the eighth century B.C.E. until the third century C.E. *LSJ* 26 sv gives just one reference: Pseudo-Callisthenes 1.30.

¹⁰¹ E.g. Xenophon, *Apol.* 34 (praise of Socrates); Hyperides, *Epitaph.* 37–8; Polybius, 2.61.5–12; 6.14.7; Phylarchus, *Fragm.* 2a,81,F.55.16; Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Dem.* 25.16[?]; Plutarchus, *Per.* 38.4.

¹⁰² N. Loraux, *L'invention d'Athènes. Histoire de l'oraison funèbre dans la 'cité classique'* (Civilisations et Sociétés 65; Paris/The Hague/New York: Mouton, 1981).

¹⁰³ Cf. a Pseudo-Clementine epitome of the acts of Peter: μνημόσυνον καλὸν τὸν ἑαυτῶν βίον καταλιπόντες "leaving behind their own life as a beautiful memory", A. R. M. Dressel, *Clementinorum epitomae duae* (Leipzig: Hinrich, 1859), 143; Pseudo-Clemens, *Hom.* 4.23.3.

but closely corresponds to the immortality of the martyrs' soul as described in 4 Maccabees.¹⁰⁴ The notion of the immortality of the soul of the youngsters is not expressed in the eagle story in the *Antiquities*, but the difficult passage in *A.J.* 17.159 discussed above contains a hint at a posthumous reward that is similar to the youngsters' response to Herod in *J.W.* 1.653.

Conclusion

The demolition of Herod's golden eagle corresponds, especially in the version in *The Jewish Antiquities*, to passages about martyrdom. The narrative pattern includes the perpetrators' arrest, a dialogue with the ruler culminating in the rebels' unflinching confession, and finally their execution. Additionally, we find in Josephus' eagle passages several motifs that are important in martyr texts. These include, voluntary death, that is, accepting death gladly for a good cause and not clinging to life in such a situation, dying for the ancestral laws as well as for piety, and a double reward, commemoration and praise by those who stayed behind as well as future generations, and a happy afterlife. In comparison to the parallel passage in *The Jewish War*, Josephus elaborates upon these motifs in the *Antiquities* considerably, but the content matter is basically the same in both narratives.

The eagle episode is essentially a clash of authorities between a radical group of Jews and their secular ruler. The two sages and their entourage could not accept, according to Josephus' reports, Herod's authority from the moment that he decided to do things that countered God's laws. The attitude of this group to the king's authority seems to be similar to that of Daniel and his companions according to Daniel 3 and 6, who could only remain obedient to the king's laws as long as these laws did not run counter to the laws of their God. Josephus mentions the rebels' radical relativization of Herod's laws in distinction to God's laws explicitly in *A.J.* 17.159 (above). In the context of such a fundamental conflict of authority, the eagle on the sanctuary's entrance must have felt as a terrible provocation. Being a well-known symbol of the king's power it must

¹⁰⁴ 4 Macc 18:23; cf. 13:13 and 14:6. This is only one aspect of the martyrs' multifaceted afterlife in 4 Maccabees, van Henten, *Maccabean Martyrs*, 172–84.

also have been considered a horrendous violation of God's laws as articulated in the second commandment, especially that close to the most holy place on earth. Herod's construction as a tyrant at the beginning and end of the *Antiquities* passage matches this worldview, only a tyrant could have thought of such a provocation. At the same time, it explains the reason for the rebellious deed and the youngsters' willingness to die for it.

The relevance of all this for the reading of Revelation is that the eagle episode helps us to imagine that violent deaths of Jesus followers may have been the result of their own actions. Revelation too constructs a fundamental clash between the divine realm and everything that is opposed to it. Josephus' noble death rhetoric is absent in Revelation, but both sources share the notion of voluntary death, the clash between the authorities of God and the ruler, as well as the posthumous vindication. Several details in Revelation, such as the eating of food sacrificed to idols (2:14, 20) or the buying or selling of goods without having the mark of the beast (13:17), suggest that this clash deeply affected the daily life of John the prophet's followers. Josephus' golden eagle episode presents a scenario in which believers stopped accepting the *status quo* and countered measures by the secular authority. With an eye on Herod's golden eagle, it is, therefore, at least imaginable that John's followers also interfered in practices of the secular authorities that opposed God's authority and that some of them were executed because of such civil disobedience.

“A WOMAN CLOTHED WITH THE SUN” AND THE
“GREAT RED DRAGON” SEEKING TO “DEVOUR HER
CHILD” (REV 12:1, 4) IN ROMAN DOMESTIC ART

David L. Balch

David E. Aune interprets an astounding range of ancient and modern sources in his commentary on Revelation. His linguistic knowledge and ability at exegesis is an excellent paradigm, but beyond many of us. In contrast, not as an ideology but as a method of research by which I have hoped to make original contributions to understanding the New Testament, I have focused on Greco-Roman culture, especially philosophy and historiography, more lately on Roman domestic art. To honor David Aune, in this instance his outstanding commentary, the question I ask in this study is, when John wrote and when Asian Christians *heard* John’s word pictures read aloud, would they have been *seeing* mythological frescoes, statues, or mosaics in their houses that would have influenced the meaning they perceived in the symbolic images John verbalized? The central thesis of this paper is that in Rev 12 John was subverting the Imperial visual representation of a pregnant woman/goddess, whose giving birth to her divine child would generate cosmic conflict. A secondary thesis is that the cosmic disorder in heaven and on earth described verbally by John has visual analogies among frescos on Roman domestic walls.

1. *Comments on the Ethnic, Political, Economic, and
Aesthetic Environment in Asia*

Among those hearing John’s Apocalypse read aloud in Asian house churches would have been some Jewish Christians who, probably like the author, had been forced to emigrate from Israel to Asia Minor after the Jewish war with Rome (66–73 C.E.).¹ Others were

¹ David E. Aune, *Revelation* (3 vols.; WBC 52A–C; Dallas: Word Books; Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997–98), 1:131. A common abbreviation in this article is PPM =

not immigrants from Israel but had already been residents of the seven cities he specifically addresses and probably also of other urban areas.² Both Aune and Trebilco assume significant tension between author and audience. Aune argues that John's "chief opponent in the churches is 'Jezebel' who calls herself a prophetess (2:20). This direct claim to prophetic authority by 'Jezebel' is countered by John's greater claim to mediate divine revelation from Jesus Christ to the seven churches."³ The "Jezebel"/Nicolaitan group espoused cultural accommodation, while John in the Apocalypse supported radically nonconformist behavior. Aune suggests that "the majority of Christians, however, seem to belong to a centrist tendency or party, which has not yet moved into the camp of the Nicolaitans, but which (from John's perspective) has departed from the works done at first (2:5), or whose works are imperfect in God's sight (3:2), or who are neither cold nor hot (3:15f)."⁴ Depending on Aune, Trebilco concludes, "we cannot equate John's attitudes on a whole range of matters with the attitudes to these matters to be found among his readers! In fact, John's attitudes are likely to be quite different from the attitudes of some of his readers."⁵

Without extensive discussion, I give two or three indications of the enthusiasm, the tendency to accommodate, that many residents of Asia had for Rome and the imperial cult. Augustan peace generated tremendous growth and prosperity in parts of Asia Minor, indicated already by Strabo around 20 C.E. for Ephesus: "the city, because of its advantageous situation in other respects grows daily, and is the largest emporium in Asia this side of the Taurus" (*Geog.* 14.1.24 (641)).⁶ The wealth is reflected in the size and decoration of the homes on the south side of Kouretes Street, built at the end of the first century B.C.E. and frequently remodeled; many of the rooms were decorated with paintings on the walls and mosaics on the floors.⁷

Pompei: Pitture e Mosaici, Ida Baldassarre, ed. (11 vols.; 1990–2003), a key resource for much of the Roman domestic art.

² Paul Trebilco, *The Early Christians in Ephesus from Paul to Ignatius* (WUNT 166; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 297.

³ David E. Aune, "The Social Matrix of the Apocalypse of John," *BR* 26 (1981): 16–32, here 19.

⁴ Aune, "Social Matrix," 28–29.

⁵ Trebilco, *Christians in Ephesus*, 340; see 298–350.

⁶ Trans. H. L. Jones in LCL, quoted by Trebilco, *Christians in Ephesus*, 14.

⁷ Volker M. Stroka, *Die Wandmalerei der Hanghäuser in Ephesos* (Forschungen in Ephesos 8.1; Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1977), with 466

In 89/90 C.E. Domitian permitted the third provincial imperial cult of the *koinon* of Asia to be built in Ephesus.⁸ Whether the visual representations seen in the houses and in the imperial cult buildings were generated in Rome and spread to the provinces or whether there was also significant provincial creativity is debated, but we must assume both Roman dominance and provincial creativity.⁹ For example, one of the most famous painters of antiquity, Apelles (active 336–304 B.C.E.; see Pliny, *Nat.* 35.36.75, 79–98), was educated in Ephesus by Ephorus.¹⁰ Augustus paid 100 talents for one of Apelles' paintings of Venus Emerging From The Sea (*Aphrodite Anadyomene*) and placed it in the Temple of the Divine Julius in the Roman forum (Pliny 35.36.91).¹¹ He also painted an Alexander the Great Holding A Thunderbolt in the Temple of Artemis at Ephesus for a fee of 20 talents in gold (Pliny 35.36.92; see Cicero, *Against Verres* 2.4.60 #135) and a Procession of the Magabyzus, the priest of Artemis of Ephesus (Pliny 35.36.93).

plates, e.g. plate 70: Heracles fights Acheloos, which Stroka (pp. 49–50) interprets by Ovid, *Metam.* VIII 881ff., IX 1ff., and dates 150–200 C.E.; plate 340: Apollon. See Paul Zanker, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1990), chap. 8: "Imperial Myth and Cult in East and West." For battle against the giant Acheloos sculpted on the Altar of Zeus in Pergamon between 189 and 166 B.C.E., see A. Yarbro Collins, "Pergamon in Early Christian Literature," in *Pergamon: Citadel of the Gods. Archaeological Record, Literary Description, and Religious Development* (ed. Helmut Koester; Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1998), 164–84. For conference papers on this baroque altar of Zeus see *From Pergamon to Sperlonga: Sculpture and Context* (ed. Nancy T. de Grummond and Brunhilde S. Ridgeway; Berkeley: University of California, 2000), e.g. 235–54, Stephan Steingrüber, "Pergamene Influences on Etruscan Hellenistic Art," who gives early examples of multi-headed serpentine monsters. I thank Brigitte Kahl for the reference to this book. Sculptures on the south frieze represent Eos and her companion Tithonos battling an opponent with the small horns of a steer, snake legs, and a gigantic human body; see Huberta Heres and Volker Kästner, *Der Pergamonaltar* (Mainz: Philipp von Zabern, 2004), figs. 40–41.

⁸ Trebilco, *Christians in Ephesus* 16, 31.

⁹ A. Wallace-Hadrill, "The Roman Revolution and Material Culture," *La Révolution Romaine après Ronald Syme: Bilans et Perspectives* (Entretiens sur l'Antiquité Classique XLVI; 1999), 283–313.

¹⁰ Paolo Moreno, *Pittura greca: Da Polignoto ad Apelle* (Milan: Mondadori, 1987), 99; Moreno, *Apelle: La Battaglia di Alessandro* (Milan: Skira, 2000), 97–123, esp. 104–07 on Ephesus; and Susan B. Matheson, "Apelles," *The Dictionary of Art*, ed. Jane Turner (New York, Grove, 1996), 2.217–18.

¹¹ Stefano De Caro, ed., *Alla ricerca di Iside: Analisi, studi e restauri dell'Isco pompeiano nel Museo di Napoli* (Rome: ARTI, 1992), 70, note by Stefania Adamo Muscettola on the statue of Venus Anadiomene (#3.8), Naples Museum inventory no. 6298. See Pierre Gros, "Iulius, Divus, Aedes," *LTUR* (1996): 3.116–19, at p. 117 who cites Strabo, *Geography* 14.2.19; Ovid, *Art of Love* 3.401–02, *Amores* 1.14.31–34; *Pontic Epistles* 4.1.29; see Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 15.843–51.

Might we not see some of this provincial creativity in John? Yarbrow Collins has argued that Revelation is characterized by a complex interaction of inherited tradition and environment, both Jewish and Hellenistic: the history-of-religions context of Revelation is to be understood as a deliberate fusion of diverse traditions.¹² In John's case this creativity also involved elements of caricature and parody, a genre that was alive and well in ancient Roman art,¹³ as it still is on the piazzas of modern Rome.

2. *The Myth of the Woman Bearing a Son Threatened by a Monster*

David E. Aune and A. Yarbrow Collins agree that the author/redactor of the Apocalypse has combined two originally distinct myths in chap. 12. One of these myths had been adapted in texts of the Hebrew Bible (e.g. Ps 74[LXX 73]:13–14; Isa 27:1; Dan 8:10–11), combat with the Dragon, but the second, the pregnant woman/goddess whose child the dragon seeks to devour, does not have roots in the Old Testament.¹⁴ In this article, I will investigate first whether and how the second myth concerning the woman, the child, and the dragon might be visually represented in Roman domestic art; then I will discuss visual representations of the other myth.

Aune discusses the combat myth and Rev 12 succinctly. He disagrees with those who search for a unitary origin of particular myths

¹² A. Yarbrow Collins "The History-of-Religions Approach to Apocalypticism and the 'Angel of the Waters' (Rev 16:4–7)," *CBQ* 39 (1977): 367–81, at 367–69. Aune, *Revelation*, 2:665 agrees.

¹³ See the caricature of Aeneas, whom Augustus' propaganda proclaimed one of the founders of Rome, in David L. Balch, "Paul's Portrait of Christ Crucified (Gal 3:1) in Light of Paintings and Sculptures of Suffering and Death in Pompeian Houses," in *Early Christian Families in Context: An Interdisciplinary Dialogue* (ed. David L. Balch and Carolyn Osiek; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 84–108, color plate 7. Compare the visual representation of Zeus with an over-sized head and a short, understated thunderbolt in his right hand in Valeria Sampaolo, "Casa del Centenario (IX 8.3.7)," *PPM IX* (1999): 903–1104, at p. 987, #156. Also the wonderful discussion by Amedeo Maiuri, *La Casa del Menandro e il suo Tesoro di Argenteria* (2 vols.; Rome: La Libreria dello Stato, 1933), 1:127–39, figs. 59–64 of l'atriolo del bagno (46), north wall: the vendetta of Aphrodite, whom the artist gives an old, deformed body, and of the loves of Zeus as grotesques.

¹⁴ Aune, *Revelation*, 2:663–64, 2:666–74; Adela Yarbrow Collins, *The Combat Myth in the Book of Revelation* (HTRHDR 9; Missoula: Scholars, 1976; Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2001, 2nd ed.), 64, 67, 70–71, 83, 111, 129. Compare Loren Stuckenbruck, "Revelation," in *Eerdmans Commentary on the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 1554–55 on early Jewish versions of the myth.

and agrees rather with those who conclude that a myth consists in all its versions: "the author has not used a coherent pagan myth; rather he has created a pastiche of mythological motifs."¹⁵ The myth of combat between a protagonist representing order and fertility and an antagonist representing chaos and sterility, often depicted as a monster, serpent, or dragon, is found in Babylon, Canaan, Egypt, and in the Greek world, where it is often narrated as a succession myth. In the latter culture the combat myth is narrated early (Hesiod, *Theog.* 820–68), but more fully by later sources (Apollodorus 1.6.1–2;¹⁶ Nonnos, *Dionysiaca* 12.29–32).¹⁷ The antagonist is named Satan only in early Jewish apocalyptic literature and in the New Testament, never in the Old Testament.

Scholars have debated sources of the myth of the pregnant woman's conflict with a dragon, some arguing for Leto as the mother, Apollo the male child, and Typhon as the antagonist, others for Isis as the mother, Horus the male child, and Seth/Typhon the antagonist. The most complete literary source for the Leto-Apollo-Python myth is Hyginus' mythography, a section that Aune quotes.¹⁸ Yarbrow Collins summarizes the constituent motifs of the Leto-Apollo-Python myth narrated by Hyginus as follows: 1) Motivation of Python's attack (possession of the oracle; *Fabulae* 140.1; cf. 2,3), 2) Leto pregnant by Zeus (140.2), 3) Python pursues Leto with intent to kill her (140.2),

¹⁵ Aune, *Revelation*, 2:667–74, at p. 672. See the careful distinction between these myths by Jan Willem van Henten, "Dragon Myth and Imperial Ideology," *SBL 1994 Seminar Papers* (Atlanta: Scholars, 1994), 496–515.

¹⁶ Apollodorus, *The Library of Greek Mythology* (trans. Robin Hard; The World's Classics; Oxford: Oxford University, 1997), written in the first or second century C.E.

¹⁷ Nonnos is a mythographer from Egypt writing before 425–428 C.E., who narrates combat myths in the first two books of his forty-eight volume work, *Dionysiaca*, but he became Christian, which means that he may have been reading John's word pictures into his own work. Francis Vian, *Nonnos de Panopolis, Les Dionysiaques, Tome I, Chants I–II* (Paris: Collections des Universités de France, 1976), ix–lxxiv; Daria Gigli Piccardi, *Nonno di Panopoli, Le Dionisiache: Introduzione, tradizione e commento* (Milan: Rizzoli, 2003), 34. Earlier compare Callimachus, Hymn II: *To Apollo*, Hymn III: *To Artemis*, and esp. Hymn IV: *To Delos* (that Mair 29 dates to 271 B.C.E.), trans. Mair in LCL, narrating cosmic conflict around Leto giving birth to Apollo and Artemis as well as their conflict with several monsters including Python (IV.1. 91). This Artemis/Diana is, of course, the goddess whose great temple was built in Ephesus; the mythology thus closely connects her birth in Delos and her temple in Ephesus. For this reference I thank my mentor in Rome, Frederick E. Brenk, S.J.

¹⁸ Aune, *Revelation*, 2:670; he dates the work before 207 C. E. Mary Grant, trans., *The Myths of Hyginus* (Lawrence: University of Kansas, 1960). P. K. Marshall, ed., *Hyginus Fabulae* (Stuttgart: Teubner, 1993).

4a) By order of Zeus the north wind rescues Leto (140.3), 4b) Poseidon aids Leto (140.3,4), 5) Birth of Apollo and Artemis (140.4), 6) Apollo defeats Python (140.5), and 7) Apollo established Pythian games (140.5).¹⁹ Yarbrow Collins argues that the myth in Rev 12 exhibits similar motifs, to which she gives corresponding numbers, but in the differing order in which they occur in Revelation, as follows: 2) A woman about to give birth (vs. 2), 3) A dragon intends to devour the child (vs. 4), 5) Birth of the child (vs. 5), 7) Kingship of the child (vs. 5), 4a) Woman is aided by God (vs. 6), 4b) by the great eagle (vs. 14), 4c) by the earth (vs. 16), and 6) Michael defeats the dragon (vs. 7–9).²⁰ However insightful this analysis, Aune sees flaws: 1) Rev 12 does not end with the defeat of the dragon, 2) the woman flees not to an island, but to the wilderness, 3) the woman gives birth *before* she flees, not after, and 4) there is no obvious motivation for the dragon to pursue the woman *after* she has given birth and *after* her child has been snatched away to heaven.²¹ Further, 5) Yarbrow Collins' designation of the child as "Champion" is not appropriate since he plays merely a cameo role, and 6) Yarbrow Collins writing of the "death" of the champion is not appropriate, since the child in Rev 12 does not die but is snatched up to heaven.²² Aune then considers possible Egyptian origins for the myth, the Isis-Horus-Seth (Typhon) myth, as narrated in three sources, Herodotus 2.156, an early Pyramid text (c. 1500 B.C.E.), and the Metternich Stele.²³

2.1. *Egyptian Texts including two new ones from the Temple at Edfu*

Thomas Schneider has recently outlined the parallels between this Egyptian myth and the birth and infancy narratives of Matthew and

¹⁹ Yarbrow Collins, *Combat Myth*, 66.

²⁰ Yarbrow Collins, *Combat Myth*, 66.

²¹ Aune, *Revelation*, 2:671.

²² Aune, *Revelation*, 2:672.

²³ Aune, *Revelation*, 2:672–74. C. E. Sander-Hansen, *Die Texte der Metternichstele* (Analecta Aegyptiaca 7; Copenhagen: Munksgaard, 1956) and a later translation by Heike Sternberg-el-Hotabi, *Die Metternichstele* (Texte aus der Umwelt des Alten Testaments II/3: Rituale und Beschwörungen II; Gütersloh: Gerd Mohn, 1988), 358–80, who dates the stele (p. 358) to the 30th dynasty (360–342 B.C.E.). This text expresses deep anxiety. The theological assertions consistently function magically to ward off specific dangers analogous to those experienced by the gods, e.g. poison, dangerous animals, snakes, often scorpions, also water animals; or the text repeatedly, frantically urges analogous healing of cats, other animals, and especially sick children. Cited by Yarbrow Collins, *Conflict Myth* 63, n. 34.

Luke. Schneider documents that the myth of the birth of Horus includes all relevant motifs that appear in the birth legends in the two gospels: 1) extraordinary conception, 2) divine proclamation, 3) the search for a safe place for the birth, 4) birth among the poor, 5) an appearance of heavenly beings, 6) the heavenly joy, 7) the anxiety of an evil king, 8) the interpretation of the epiphany as meaning the birth of a redeemer king, 9) gifts to the child and homage, 10) the murder of children and the following search for the one born to be the redeemer king, 11) the flight and hiding of the child, and 12) his final return.²⁴ Two of the Egyptian texts that Schneider quotes have not, as far as I am aware, been read in relation to Rev 12, but his points 11) and 12) are especially relevant to the interpretation of this chapter. I will utilize four of the texts.

Commenting on Coffin Text Spell 148,²⁵ Münster concludes, “in connection with the statements of the text about the birth of Horus, the following is important: Isis requests protection for the unborn child in her body against Seth, who could kill it while it is still in its mother’s body,”²⁶ a close parallel to Rev 12:2, 4. Selected lines of O’Connell’s analysis of the schema of Spell 148 are as follows:

PART I

Isis rejoices in hope that Osiris’ death may still be avenged on Seth by the seed of Osiris within her womb. (211a–13b). . .

Atum-Re calms the agitated Isis with an admonition to keep the father of the foetus a secret from Seth—thus he grants approval of the foetus’s divine protection. (217c–18a)

Isis rejoices that her request for divine protection of the foetus in her womb has been granted. (218b–19b)

²⁴ Thomas Schneider, “Die Geburt des Horuskindes. Eine ägyptische Vorlage der neutestamentlichen Weihnachtsgeschichte,” *TZ* 60.3 (2004): 254–71, here 257: the list of twelve motifs.

²⁵ Schneider, “Geburt des Horuskindes,” 257–58, observes that Coffin Texts are later than the Pyramid Texts but earlier than the Ptolemies. On Coffin Text Spell 148 see Maria Münster, *Untersuchungen zur Göttin Isis vom Alten Reich bis zum Ende des Neuen Reiches* (Münchener ägyptologische Studien 11; Berlin: Bruno Hessling, 1968), 6–10; Rainer Hannig, “Die Schwangerschaft der Isis,” *Festschrift Jürgen von Beckerath zum 70. Geburtstag am 19. Februar 1990* (Hildesheimer Ägyptologische Beiträge 30; Hildesheim: Gerstenberg Verlag, 1990), 91–95; and Robert H. O’Connell, “The Emergence of Horus. An Analysis of Coffin Text Spell 148,” *JEA* 69 (1983): 66–87. Cited by Yarbro Collins, *Combat Myth* 63, n. 33.

²⁶ Münster, *Göttin Isis* 9 (my translation of her German), a conclusion that follows from her translation of the text on p. 7.

Isis incites the unborn foetus to take up the place of Osiris so as to vindicate his name. (219c–20d)

PART II

Isis procures a position of prominence for her son, hereafter named Horus. (221c–2a). . . .

Horus, elaborating on the fact of his divine origin and protection in the womb of Isis, affirms that he is safe from all assault. (225b–e)²⁷

Further, in Coffin Text Spell 148, through Isis' prayer to Re, her son Horus receives a place in the sun-ship; Horus receives a *mḥn*-snake, one like the sun god possesses. Horus receives a position among the powerful gods, a place in heaven,²⁸ as does the child in Rev 12:5. In Coffin Text 760 Isis enables her son to become Lord of the night sky, the moon god who follows the sun god; he has the highest position in the cosmos after Re.²⁹

Schneider also presents two texts, D and E, from the Temple at Edfu, dated to the end of the second century B.C.E., texts translated by Dieter Kurth.³⁰ These two texts have remarkable parallels to Rev 12, more extensive than those found in Herodotus 1.156, the Metternich Stele, and Plutarch, *Isis and Osiris*. On the basis of those three texts Yarbrough Collins outlined the Isis-Horus-Seth myth (following the order of Rev 12) as follows: 1) Motivation of attack by Seth-Typhon on Osiris (kingship), 2) Isis pregnant by Osiris, 5) Birth of Horus, 3) Seth-Typhon persecuted Isis and child in order to kill child, 4) Isis aided by Ra and Thoth, 6) Horus defeats Seth-Typhon, 7) Kingship of Horus.³¹

²⁷ O'Connell, "Spell 148," 86–87; his full outline is a "tentative schema of the genre-form of this [poetic] spell." The Metternich Stele presents the threatened life situation of the small child, Horus, an analogy for problem cases of magical oaths, an example for the actual social-religious function of the citation of the myth; see Sternberg el-Hotabi's translation, "Metternichstele," 368, 374, 377, 379.

²⁸ Münster, *Göttin Isis*, 17–22.

²⁹ Münster, *Göttin Isis*, 21.

³⁰ Dieter Kurth, "Über Horus, Isis und Osiris," *The Intellectual Heritage of Egypt: Studies Presented to László Kákossy by Friends and Colleagues on the Occasion of His 60th Birthday* (ed. Ulrich Luft; Studia Aegyptiaca XIV; Budapest: Universit   E  tv  s Lor  nd de Budapest, 1992), 373–83. Van Henten, "Dragon Myth" 507, n. 69 does refer to "Horus von Edfu." See William Brashear, "Horus," RAC 16 (1992): 574–97, esp. 575–78 on the conflict, and 592 on Egyptian Christians' substitution of Michael as the victor over the dragon Seth (compare Rev 12:7)! R. Merkelbach, "Drache," RAC 4 (1959): 226–50, 233 on Egypt, 236–37 on Greece (Plutarch, *Mor.* 293 B.C., 418A–C on Delphi), 238–39 on Rev 12, and 243 on Constantine.

³¹ Yarbrough Collins, *Combat Myth*, 66.

The narrative texts D and E from the Temple at Edfu expand this outline. As in Rev 12:1a, there are signs in heaven, the morning star or light itself.³² Isis cries out with birth pangs as in Rev 12:2.³³ Seth is red, as is the dragon in Rev 12:3: a red Nile-horse, a red donkey; or the enemy Seth has the form of a snake.³⁴ Horus' diadem is gold,³⁵ although in Rev 12:3 the dragon not the child wears (seven) diadems. Horus is motivated to fight for the throne of his father (Yarbro Collins #1) and accuses Seth of murdering his father.³⁶ Isis is pregnant by Osiris (Yarbro Collins #2).³⁷ Horus is born (Rev 12:5, Yarbro Collins #5).³⁸ There is joy at his birth (in Luke 1–2, not Rev 12); God's mother breaks out in joy, and men are joyful.³⁹ Seth-Typhon persecutes Isis and the child in order to kill the child (Rev 12:4b, 13, 17; Yarbro Collins #3); Seth seeks Horus without finding him.⁴⁰ War breaks out (Rev 12:7a, that Yarbro Collins assigns to a different myth). Michael and his angels fight the dragon: Horus has "followers," a thousand men; all gods and goddesses are Horus' followers.⁴¹ The war is narrated.⁴² Horus changes into a huge young man.⁴³ The dragon and his angels fight back (Rev 12:7c); crocodiles are around Seth.⁴⁴ There are multiple stages in the war (all of Rev): Horus, Lord of lower Egypt, attacks Seth, Lord of upper Egypt, and drives Seth out of Egypt. Another battle is at Byblos; after consulting astronomers, there is still another battle at Gau of Wadjet.⁴⁵ Isis and Horus are aided by Ra and Thoth, the weak aided by the strong (Rev 12:5b–6; Yarbro Collins #4).⁴⁶ Horus defeats Seth-Typhon (Yarbro Collins #6); Seth is slaughtered.⁴⁷ There is prayer for and jubilation at victory (Rev 12:10–12, typically assigned

³² Kurth, 374 [D], 378 [E].

³³ Kurth, 374 [D].

³⁴ Kurth, 375 [D], 380 [E], 379 [E].

³⁵ Kurth, 374 [D].

³⁶ Kurth, 375 [D], 376 [D].

³⁷ Kurth, 373 [D], 380–81 [E].

³⁸ Kurth, 374 [D], 378 [E].

³⁹ Kurth, 374 [D], 378 [E].

⁴⁰ Kurth, 374 [D], 375 [D], 379 [E].

⁴¹ Kurth, 374–75 [D], 377 [D], 378 [E], 380 [E].

⁴² Kurth, 376 [D].

⁴³ Kurth, 376 [D], 380 [E].

⁴⁴ Kurth, 375 [D], 377 [D].

⁴⁵ Kurth, 379 [E], 380 [E].

⁴⁶ Kurth, 373–75 [D].

⁴⁷ Kurth, 377 [D], 380 [E].

to a redactor).⁴⁸ God's mother requests ships; there is prayer for wind and a plea that Horus is only a child. Horus is praised, but Seth defamed.⁴⁹ There is no longer place for the dragon and his angels in heaven (Rev 12:8b–9a); Horus drove Seth out of Egypt.⁵⁰ Horus becomes king (Rev 12:5a, Yarbrow Collins #7).⁵¹

Schneider interprets a fourth text, Papyrus Louvre 3079.⁵² In this Paris Hymn, "She [Isis] took his [Osiris'] semen into herself and brought forth the heir; she reared the child in isolation, without anyone knowing where he was," another illustration of the pregnant mother hiding from the dragon Seth, as in Rev 12:4b, 13, 17.

Several observations follow from relating these Egyptian texts to Rev 12. In the Metternich Stele, isolated elements of the story are mentioned in relation to particular magical spells, but Coffin Text Spell 148, several centuries earlier than Revelation, as well as texts D and E from the Edfu Temple, dated around 100 B.C.E., so two centuries earlier than Revelation, are connected narratives. Both myths of 1) the pregnant woman/goddess pursued by the dragon and 2) of the dragon's war against divine order (see also Plutarch, *Isis and Osiris* 358D, 363D, 367A) are narrated in the Temple at Edfu. The transition from Rev 12:6 to 7 is abrupt, and the author may have combined these two myths again, but the combination is not original to the author of the Apocalypse. There are also prayers and celebrations, as in Rev 12:10–12, more jubilation at the birth of Horus, however, than at his defeat of Seth. The motivations for the praise in Rev 12, especially vs. 11, victory by the blood of the Lamb, are different, but prayer and jubilation are present in the Egyptian myth narrated in the temple at Edfu. Further, the new texts presented by Schneider meet one of Aune's objections to Yarbrow

⁴⁸ Maurice Alliot, *Le Culte d'Horus à Edfou au Temps des Ptolémées* (Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, Bibliothèque d'Étude XX, 1–2; Caire: l'Institut Français, 1949 and 1954), 1.317–23 on divine images in the *naos*, 1.293–94 on the festival of the birth of Horus, 2.561–676 on the festival of the coronation of the king, 2.677–822 on the festival of victory. Alliot (1.263) dates the calendar text at Edfu to 116–80 B.C.E. See J. Gwyn Griffiths, *The Conflict of Horus and Seth: A Study in Ancient Mythology* (Liverpool: Liverpool University, 1960).

⁴⁹ Kurth, 375 [D], 376 [D], 377 [D], 379 [E].

⁵⁰ Kurth, 379 [E].

⁵¹ Kurth, 377–78 [D, an epiphany], 379 [E].

⁵² W. Spiegelberg, "Varia," *ŽAS* 53 (1917): 91–115, esp. 94–96, "3. Eine neue Legende über die Geburt des Horus"; also Münster, *Göttin Isis*, at 5–6, who observes (5, n. 87) that Pap. Louvre 3079 is late.

Collins' emphasis on the Egyptian origins of the myth, namely that Rev 12 does not end with the defeat of the dragon. Neither does text E from Edfu end after the first battle, but narrates successive battles in the war. Aune's other objections to a unitary origin of the myth remain.

2.2. *The Pregnant Io (Greek)/Isis (Egyptian)/Venus (Roman) in Domestic Art, an Imperial Visual Representation*

Neither John nor many of the members of these Asian house churches were from Egypt; how would they have known these myths? Yarbrow Collins' suggestion⁵³ that Isis iconography played an important role can be strengthened. The myth of a goddess giving birth to a divine child, the prospect of whose birth generates cosmic conflict, was not only written down in texts as just outlined, but was also visually represented. The iconography of Isis was prominent in Roman domestic art. The introduction above (see nn. 7, 10) notes that Apelles, a painter trained in Ephesus, was popular in Rome, and that Ephesian houses had frescoes on their walls; given the enthusiasm for assimilation to Roman values, art styles in Rome, the imperial capital, would also have influenced Asian domestic art.⁵⁴ When early Greeks heard the story of Isis, they perceived it as similar to their own myth of Io,⁵⁵ and later Romans painted her on their domestic walls. The Temple of Isis in Pompeii has an *ecclesiasterion*, a large room in which it is probable that worshippers gathered and ritual banquets were held; there is an "iconostasis" on both the north and south walls. On both walls the central visual representation is of Io.⁵⁶ The central "icon" on the north wall is of 1) Io, pregnant by Zeus, 2) Argos

⁵³ Yarbrow Collins, *Combat Myth*, 75.

⁵⁴ Ida Baldassarre, Angela Pontrandolfo, Agnes Rouveret, and Monica Salvadori, *Pittura romana: dall'ellenismo al Tardo-Antico* (Milan: Federico Motta, 2002) give numerous examples of frescoes in the four successive styles of Roman art that have been found in the Roman world *outside* Italy, e.g. pp. 115–17, examples of the second style in Herod's palaces in Jericho, Masada, and the Herodium. Compare Ray Laurence, "The uneasy dialogue between ancient history and archaeology," *Archaeology and Ancient History: Breaking down the boundaries* (London: Routledge, 2004), 99–113.

⁵⁵ Jean M. Davison, "Myth and the Periphery, in *Myth and the Polis*, ed. Dora C. Pozzi and J. M. Wickersham (Ithica: Cornell University, 1991), 49–63.

⁵⁶ David L. Balch, "The Suffering of Isis/IO and Paul's Portrait of Christ Crucified (Gal 3:1): Frescoes in Pompeian and Roman Houses and in the Temple of Isis in Pompeii," *JR* 83.1 (2003): 24–55.

with his myriad-eyes,⁵⁷ who had been sent by a jealous Hera to guard Io, and 3) Hermes, Zeus' envoy, who ordered him to kill Argos (see Aeschylus, *Prometheus Bound* 561–886 and **plate 1**).⁵⁸ Io's son will be mightier than his father (Aeschylus 768, referring to Heracles/Hercules), and their later descendants will found a royal house in Argos (Aeschylus 869). This visual representation, without Hermes but guarded by the many-eyed Argos, was also painted in the market place in Pompeii, where Io is visibly pregnant (see **plate 2**),⁵⁹ and in several houses in Pompeii, e.g. the House of the Lyre Player,⁶⁰ where she is also visibly pregnant. This was a popular image that was seen in temple, market, and I emphasize, in Roman houses, where already in the early Pauline mission, Christians had met and worshipped.

The most important house for understanding the Imperial interpretation of this myth is the so-called House of Livia, Augustus' wife, in Rome (see **plate 3**).⁶¹ The decisive clue for understanding the Imperial interpretation of this image lies in a beautiful statue of Venus in the Temple of Isis in Pompeii.

The presence of a statue of Venus in a sanctuary of Isis is not surprising. . . . At Pompeii the syncretism of the two cults [of Venus and Isis] is demonstrated by a painting (in the Pompeian house VII 9,47) where a procession of Isis advances carrying the throne of the goddess on a *ferculum* (litter) toward the temple of Venus Pompeiana.⁶²

⁵⁷ Compare and contrast Eze 1:18; 10:12; Dan 7:8, 20; Rev 4:6, 8; 5:6.

⁵⁸ Balch, "Temple of Isis," fig. 11. Valeria Sampaolo, "Tempio di Iside (VIII 7.28)," PPM VIII 732–849, at p. 825, #188. Naples Museum inventory 9548.

⁵⁹ Balch, "Temple of Isis," figs. 5–7. Valeria Sampaolo, "Macellum (VII 9,7)," PPM VII 328–52, at p. 346, #25, in situ. For early photographs see Monica Maffioli, ed., *Fotografi a Pompei nell'800 dalle collezioni del Museo Alinari* (Florence: Alinari, 1990), 90–91.

⁶⁰ Balch, "Temple of Isis," figs. 3–4. See Mariette de Vos, "Casa del Citarista (I 4,25)," PPM I (1990), 117–77, at p. 129, #21.

⁶¹ Balch, "Temple of Isis," figs. 1–2, and Karl Galinsky, *Augustan Culture: An Interpretive Introduction* (Princeton: Princeton University, 1996), 181–83, fig. 98. Some think that the "House of Augustus" may have been the "public" space in this complex, the "House of Livia" the residential space.

⁶² *Alla ricerca di Iside*, De Caro, ed., 70 (my translation). See n. 11 above: Apelles' painting, which Augustus placed in the Temple of the Divine Julius, is the same subject as the statue of Venus in the Temple of Isis in Pompeii, perhaps not a coincidence. See Reinhold Merkelbach, *Isis regina—Zeus Sarapis: Die griechisch-ägyptische Religion nach den Quellen dargestellt* (Stuttgart: Teubner, 2001, 2nd ed.), 95–96, #167, n. 4; but contrast Carl Koch, "Venus," *Paulys Realencyclopädie der Classischen Altertumswissenschaft* (Stuttgart: Alfred Druckenmüller, 1955), VIII A1, 828–87, at 842, references for which I thank Giovanni Casadio.

This domestic fresco portrays a statue of Venus in the center; and to her left a group of ten young people advance toward the goddess led by a young woman shaking a *sistrum* (a ritual rattle) of Isis.⁶³ This syncretism, the identification of the two goddesses, means that Imperial propaganda could understand the pregnant Io in the House of Livia as a pregnant Venus, the divine ancestress of the Julian dynasty (Suetonius, *The Deified Julius* 6.1; 61: Venus Genetrix). Isidorus, *Hymn* 1.26 calls Isis the “undying Savior, of many-names”⁶⁴ (see Apuleius, *Metam.* 11.2, 5), which specifically includes “Leto” (1.19) and “Aphrodite” = Venus (1.21).

The cultural context is illuminated by Cicero—with reference to the geographical area addressed by John in his Apocalypse—when he prosecuted Gaius Verres in 70 B.C.E.⁶⁵ The technical charge was extortion, but more basically the accusation was criminal misgovernment and oppression when he was governor of Sicily, but for my argument, it is crucial that Cicero also narrates Verres’ earlier behavior as assistant governor: “We know the vast scale of his vile robberies and outrages—not merely in Sicily, but in Achaia and Asia and Cilicia and Pamphylia, and even in Rome before the eyes of us all.” (Cicero’s introductory “Speech delivered against Quintus Caecilius Niger” #6).⁶⁶ One of Cicero’s key arguments concerns Verres’ theft of valued “statues and pictures” (*Verres* 2.1.20 #55; see 2.1.22 #59 and 2.1.17 #45). One would have to read the whole (*Verres* 2.1.18–23 #49–61 on Asia; the whole of 2.4.1–67 #1–151 on Sicily) to gain a full impression of the deep fervor that Asians, Sicilians, and Romans attached both to the myths and to these statues and pictures of the gods/goddesses, as well as their outrage when Verres stole them from their temples and houses. I quote only the section dealing with the myth and visual representations being discussed in this paper, the pregnant Leto as related to Delos:

⁶³ Valeria Sampaolo, “Casa delle Nozze di Ercole (VII 9,47),” PPM VII (1998): 358–77, here 373, #32, from a drawing of 1868–69.

⁶⁴ Benedetta Rossignoli, “Iside,” *Le Religioni dei Misteri*, ed. Paolo Scarpi, vol. II: *Samotracia, Andania, Iside, Cibele e Attis, Mitraismo* (Lorenzo Valla; Milan: Mondadori, 2003, 2nd ed.), 115–257, 468–532, here 230–31. Rossignoli dates (515) Isidorus “perhaps to the first century B.C.E.” Maria Totti, *Ausgewählte Texte der Isis- und Sarapis-Religion* (Subsidia Epigraphica 12; Hildesheim: Olms, 1985), 76–82.

⁶⁵ Cicero, *The Verrine Orations*, trans. L. H. G. Greenwood in LCL (1978).

⁶⁶ Compare *Verres* 2.1.34 #86 and 2.1.37 #95 where Cicero lists Miletus, Lycia, Pamphylia, Pisidia, and Phrygia. Also 2.4.32 #71: Athens, Delos, Samos, Perga, Asia and Greece, Rome; and 2.4.60 #135.

He [Verres] reached Delos [as assistant governor (*legatus*), earlier than his appointment as governor in Sicily]. There one night he secretly carried off, from the much-revered sanctuary of Apollo, several ancient and beautiful statues (*signa pulcherrima atque antiquissima*), and had them put on board his own transport. Next day, when the inhabitants of Delos saw their sanctuary stripped of its treasures, they were much distressed; for, to show how ancient, and how much venerated by them, that sanctuary is, they believe it to be the birthplace of Apollo himself. (*Verres* 2.1.17 #46)

The citizens of Delos were afraid to accuse the Roman assistant governor, so said nothing. But a storm came up, suddenly lashing the town and the ship with huge waves.

In that storm this pirate's ship, with its load of sacred statues, was driven ashore by the waves and went to pieces. The statues of Apollo were found lying on the beach: by Dollabella's [the governor's] order, they were put back where they came from; the storm abated, and Dolabella left Delos . . . (*Verres* 2.1.18 #46)

You [Verres] dared to rob Apollo—Apollo of Delos? Upon that temple, so ancient, so holy, so profoundly venerated, you sought to lay your impious and sacrilegious hands? Even though as a boy you did not receive the kind of education and training that would enable you to learn or understand the records of literature, could you not even take in later, when you came to the actual spot, the story of which both tradition and literature inform us: how after long wanderings the fugitive Latona, being pregnant, and the time of her delivery now fully come, found refuge in Delos, and there brought forth Apollo and Diana? Because men believe this story, they hold the island sacred to those deities; and the reverence felt for it is, and has always been, so strong, that not even the Persians—though they had declared war upon all Greece, gods and men alike, and their fleet, to the number of a thousand ships, had put in at Delos—yet not even they sought to profane, or to lay a finger upon, anything therein. (*Verres* 2.1.18 #46–48)

Cicero verbally narrates the myth, but at least as central are the visual representations of the myth, the statues. Cicero assumes that everyone, even the archetypal barbarians, the Persians, certainly also the people in the geographical area of Verres' misgovernment, not only Delos but also Asia [Minor] and Rome,⁶⁷ valued both the myths

⁶⁷ The myth is sculpted on a few Roman sarcophagi; see Guntram Koch and Hellmut Sichtermann, *Römische Sarkophage* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1982), 141. Also Frank Brommer, *Denkmälerlisten zur griechischen Heldensage* (3 vols.; Marburg: N. G. Elwert, 1976), 3:404–05.

and these visual representations of the gods and goddesses, specifically of the pregnant Leto and of the birth of Apollo and Artemis. John's readers would not have valued these myths and visual representations as much as Cicero's rhetoric suggests, but—living in the same geographical area—many of them would have been aware of the myths and will have seen their visual representations. The story of Leto giving birth to Apollo and Artemis on Delos in Greco-Roman culture is comparable to the story of Mary giving birth to Jesus in Bethlehem in modern Western culture. Both were/are visually represented, and readers/viewers would recognize allusions to them.

Not only the statues of Apollo on Delos but also the fresco of Io (identified with Isis, who is identified with Leto and Venus) in the House of Livia connects Rome and Ephesus/Asia. The original painter of this Io was Nikias, an Athenian active in the second half of the fourth century B.C.E.). Because it "delighted" him, Augustus took Nikias' painting of *Hyacinthos* from Alexandria, and Tiberius later placed it in the Temple of the Deified Augustus in Rome (Pliny, *Nat.* 35.40.131).⁶⁸ Nikias also painted the tomb of a priest of Artemis at Ephesus (Pliny, *Nat.* 35.40.132; see Pausanias 1.29.15). "The pictures of *Io*, *Perseus and Andromeda*, and *Calypso* [by Nikias] seem to have inspired a group of wall paintings at Rome and Pompeii, since several versions of all three subjects exist. . . ."⁶⁹ It seems a safe assumption that Nikias' visual representation of Io was painted not only in the Imperial house in Rome and on Pompeian walls, but also on the domestic walls of Ephesus, where Nikias was well known and valued, where Isis was venerated, and whose residents were anxious to please the emperors.

Io's son Heracles/Hercules was not only founder of the royal line in Argos, but also one of the five founders of Rome (Dionysius Hal., *Rom. Ant.* 1.34; see Livy 1.7). Augustan propaganda included an image of Io/Isis/Venus, pregnant by Zeus and threatened by a

⁶⁸ M. Torelli, "Bibliotheca Templi Divi Augusti," *LTUR* (1993): 1.197. Herbert Jennings Rose and B. C. Dietrich, "Hyacinthus," *Oxford Classical Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University, 1996, 1999), 734 observe that in the Bronze Age Hyacinthus merged with Apollo.

⁶⁹ G. I. Vzdornov, "Nikias," *Dictionary of Art*, ed. Turner, 23.141–42, here 142. See Balch, "Temple of Isis," 45, citing Burkhardt Wesenberg, "Zur Io des Nikias in den Pompeijanischen Wandbildern," in *Kanon: Festschrift Ernst Berger zum 60. Geburtstag* (ed. Margot Schmidt, Antike Kunst, Beiheft no. 15; Basel: Vereinigung der Freunde antike Kunst, 1988), 344–52. For further bibliography, Nicola Hoesch, "Nikias (3)," *Der Neue Pauly* (2000): 8.913–14.

many-eyed monster; but this mother of God (for this designation see Kurth 375 [D], 378 [E]), protected by Zeus, would eventually find safe haven in Egypt (see plate 4)⁷⁰ and bear a divine son, the pharaoh of Egypt, as well as lineages of divine royalty in Argos and Rome. The author of the Apocalypse, chapter 12, was subverting⁷¹ visual Imperial propaganda,⁷² visual representations venerated in Delos but also in an unimportant, middle-sized town like Pompeii, and offering a subversive theology of alternative word pictures. Would John's readers/hearers/viewers choose cultural/political/religious accommodation or nonconformist behavior? Who was the Mother of God, who was also the readers'/viewers' Mother? And who is Her Child/Son, Augustus and his Imperial divine sons or rather the Lamb and Her children to be martyred by Rome?

3. *The Combat Myth of Cosmic Revolt*

The second myth (without the motif of a woman bearing a son) was known in many cultures and was adapted in the Hebrew Bible.

In Greek tradition Ge functions like Tiamat [in Accadian tradition] in that she is the mother of the gods and yet produces monsters to overthrow the ruling gods of heaven. The battles of Zeus and his allies with the Titans (Hesiod, *Theog.* 617–735) and with the Giants (Apollod. 1.6.1–2) are analogous to the battle of Marduk with Tiamat, Kingu

⁷⁰ See the second fresco of Io, still pregnant, in Balch, "Temple of Isis," fig. 10, and in Sampaolo, "Tempio di Iside," 835–837, #206.

⁷¹ I owe the use of this verb to my colleague in theology, Stephen V. Sprinkle. In the categories of John Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora from Alexander to Trajan (323 B.C.E.–117 C.E.)* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1996), the author of Revelation is acculturating (employing linguistic, educational, ideological aspects of a cultural matrix) and accommodating (employing cultural tools such as language and concepts of thought), but not assimilating (socially integrating, becoming similar to one's neighbor). This modifies the conclusion of Trebilco, *Christians in Ephesus* 324–27, 351–53, 624 that "John's solution to the problems posed by pagan worship for the Christian seems to have as little as possible to do with pagan social and cultural life" (324). Although he is subverting it, John is employing an Imperial conflict myth.

⁷² Another popular, Imperial, domestic visual representation that would throw light on Rev 12 is the battle of Perseus with the sea monster to save Andromeda painted in the third style (first half of the first century C.E.), an event that several classical authors locate at Joppa (e.g. Josephus, *War* 3.419, 421); however, Io is pregnant, Andromeda is not. See Kyle M. Phillips Jr., "Perseus and Andromeda," *AJA* 72.1 (1968): 1–23, plates 1–20. Van Henten, "Dragon Myth and Imperial Ideology," adds evidence to this conclusion.

and their allies. When Zeus defeated the Titans, he consigned them to Tartarus (*Theog.* 717–35). . . . The battle of Zeus with Typhon was perhaps understood as the central encounter of the gigantomachy. According to Hesiod, Zeus cast Typhon into Tartarus after conquering him.⁷³

Hesiod (*Theog.* 617–735, 836–38), Plutarch (*On Isis and Osiris* 363E, 368D), and Apollodorus (1.2.1, 6.3) tell the tale, but Nonnos (*Dionysiaca* 1.163–64, 180–81; 2.271–72, 296–315, 337–41), is more elaborate.

The most striking characteristic of Nonnos' account is that, like Dan 8:10–11, one of the major acts of rebellion is an attack on the stars. Typhon stretched his hands to the upper air and seized the various constellations, dragging them from their places and even knocking them out of the sky. He dragged the two fishes (the zodiacal sign Pisces) out of the sky and threw them into the sea (Nonnos, *Dion.* 1.163–64, 180–81).⁷⁴

3.1. *The Epiphany of Apollo and the Sun-Torch/Sun-Chariot in Roman Domestic Art*

This is the subject of a controversial series of visual representations that—assuming Ephesian/Asian domestic culture assimilated the successive styles of Roman/Pompeian Imperial aesthetics—would have been available in the domestic environment in which the author wrote the Apocalypse and the readers heard these word pictures of the dragon, whose “tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to earth” (Rev 12:3a). My argument in this section is more indirect than in the former one. In the section above I argued that John was subverting a specific type of myth, whether in its Egyptian, Greek, or Roman form. Here by contrast, I am arguing

⁷³ Yarbro Collins, *Combat Myth*, 79–80. Rev 12:9, 14–15 (see 20:2) calls the dragon a “snake.” The *cuirass* (armour) of the equestrian statue of Vespasian/Nerva, found in the sacellum of the Augustals (priests who celebrated the cult of the emperor) at Baia/Miseno on the bay near Pozzuoli/Naples, features a representation on Vespasian's right chest of the young Heracles/Hercules strangling snakes, which was also a popular subject in Roman domestic art, another visual representation of the Imperial conflict myth that Rev 12 is subverting. See Paola Miniero, *Baia: the castle, museum and archaeological sites* (Naples: Electa, 2003), 53–57 and Alfonso de Francis, *Il Sacello degli Augustali a Miseno* (Naples: ARTE Tipografica, 1991), plates 30–33. For the domestic fresco, see Balch, “Dining Rooms N and P of the House of the Vettii in Pompeii.” Also Noel Forsyth, *The Old Enemy: Satan and the Combat Myth* (Princeton: Princeton University, 1987).

⁷⁴ Yarbro Collins, *Combat Myth*, 78.

rather than visual mythical representations on Roman walls have some analogy to John's verbal apocalyptic pictures, so that his language would have seemed less strange or unfamiliar to Greco-Roman readers. This is still important to argue because Greco-Roman culture was visual. It is not only true that Ovid wrote of these cosmic disorders for the intellectual delight of an elite readership, but also that everyone living and worshipping in Roman houses—masters and slaves, males and females, older and younger, patrons and clients, educated and uneducated, the worshippers of many divinities as well as Jews and Christians—saw these images daily.

Before describing these frescoes, I raise two points crucial for understanding, first: "the story of a myth unfolds in time; an image is static. How does an artist decide what moment to illustrate?"⁷⁵ If around Christmas time we were to see an image of a young, pregnant woman on a donkey accompanied by an older man, most would recognize the image and know at least one version of the preceding and succeeding episodes of the story. Even though many modern persons may no longer know the story/myth discussed below, the images of the one dramatic moment portrayed assume the entire story. Second, in contrast to some contemporary, Northern European and North American, Western Christian sensibilities, Greeks and Romans typically chose dramatic moments to sculpt or paint that enabled them to exhibit beautiful, nude human bodies in their temples or houses, as the following series of frescoes demonstrates. Phrased differently, the sex and beautiful, nude bodies that we see occasionally in two-hour films and on TV are often the dramatic moments that Romans chose to have painted on their domestic walls.

Erika Simon labels these frescoes by the name art historians have traditionally used: *Sternenstreit*, a contest of the stars of the day and the night as judged by Apollo.⁷⁶ For modern persons Venus is the

⁷⁵ Susan Woodford, *Images of Myths in Classical Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2003), chap. 3, "Choosing a Moment," here 28.

⁷⁶ Erika Simon, "Apollo," *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae* II/1 (1984): 363–464, at p. 421, #421. She observes (419) that the designation goes back to R. Rehm, "Hesperos," *RE* VIII/1 (1912), 1250–57, here 1255, and R. Herbig in *Denkmäler der Malerei des Altertums* I (ed. P. Hermann, R. Herbig, and F. Bruckmann; Munich, 1904–1931), Taf. 228, a work I have not seen. Karl Schefold, *Pompejanische Malerei: Sinn und Ideengeschichte* (Basel: Benno Schwabe, 1952), 134–35, Taf. 37, agrees, referring to R. Herbig's interpretation of Hyginus, *Astron.* 2,42 and to a "Throne in Boston."

second planet from the sun, the morning and evening star. In Greco-Roman antiquity this is the star named most often after the sun and the moon. Greeks gave the name Hesperos to the evening star and the area of the sunset.⁷⁷ They called the morning star Phosphoros, but neither the name nor the gender of either the morning or evening star(s) is/are consistent. Scholars debate whether Greeks recognized the identity of the two phases, or whether they naively distinguished them, as does the phrase the morning and evening star(s). Hesperos is praised as the most beautiful (Homer, *Iliad* 2.22.318; Pliny, *Nat.* 2.36). In visual representations Hesperos is most often the companion of the sun, first developed by Nonnos (*Dion.* 12.3; 38.29), or appears as the servant of Helios, much more often than does Phosphoros. Roman mythography interpreted Hesperos as the star of the divinized Caesar (Virgil, *Ecl.* 9.47; Propertius 4.6.59).

Simon describes the *Sternenstreit* in four domestic frescoes: 1) the Casa di Apollo (VI 7,23 in Pompeii), cubicolo (25), the west wall just off the garden (24), in situ; see **plate 5**,⁷⁸ early fourth style (Neronian). This house is just north of the forum. One enters, passes through the atrium (2) and tablinum (7), the latter with a statuette of Apollo, then turns right (north) into a striking garden with four-foot high terrace on three sides (24). On the far north wall, the side without the terrace, are three large niches above an external triclinium. To the left in the far northwest corner and up as high as the terrace is a separate room with two alcoves. Sampaolo (471) thinks of rooms for refuge and meditation in country villas. On entering one sees the west wall, Phoebus/Apollo/the sun god presented frontally, enthroned in a theatrical setting (*scaenae frons*). With his right hand he holds a torch (Apollo's sun torch); a mantel falls over his left leg, but the right leg and his upper body are nude. With his left hand he points to his left toward a sitting Venus, who is also nude except for a cloak over her left arm and leg, but Apollo gazes at Hesperos sitting on his right, who also holds a torch in his left hand. All three have halos. Simon refers to Rehm's references to an almost forgotten star story in which Hesperos challenged Venus to

⁷⁷ Rehm, "Hesperos," 1251, 1254, on whom this paragraph depends.

⁷⁸ See Valeria Sampaolo, "Casa di Apollo (VI 7,23)," PPM IV (1993): 470–524, at pp. 512, 516–17 and 522–23, #71, 80–81, 87–88, esp. 523, #88; Wilhelm Zahn, *Die schönsten Ornamente und merkwürdigsten Gemälde aus Pompeji, Herculaneum und Stabiae nebst einigen Grundrissen und Ansichten nach den am Ort und Stelle gemachten Originalzeichnungen* (Berlin: Reimer, 1828–1859), 2:76.

a beauty contest. The judge of the competition is not given in the literature, but the Pompeian frescoes show him as Phoebus/Apollo, to which this fresco in the Casa di Apollo is the earliest witness.⁷⁹ Marsyas' disastrous challenge of Apollo is painted on the adjacent north wall;⁸⁰ these two frescoes indicate that Apollo is judge of both the divine stars and of humans. Apollo severely punishes Marsyas' pride by flaying him alive, some sculptures of which look remarkably like a crucifixion.

2) Also Neronian is the fresco in the small Pompeiian house at I 3,25, oecus (h).⁸¹ The fresco is similar to the one in the Casa di Apollo, and the background is again stage architecture, which raises the question, Simon suggests,⁸² whether this was material for a Neronian pantomime. The role of Venus and of the beautiful, young male Hesperos, and of Phoebus as judge of the beauty contest, would then have been danced before the audience. The result would probably not have been the same as in the Judgment of Paris, the victory of Venus, Simon thinks, but rather a pronouncement of equality; both were, as had long been known, a single star.

3) The Casa di M. Gavius Rufus (VII 2,16–17), Exedra (o), south wall.⁸³ Sampaolo says that the characters in this scene are represented in an ambiguous manner, and in addition some of the details are not well preserved, which leaves the interpretation in doubt. The

⁷⁹ Simon 421, #419 (but see below). See Laura Caso, "Gli affreschi del cubicolo 'amphithalamos' della Casa di Apollo," in *Rivista di Studi Pompeiani* 3 (1989): 111–130.

⁸⁰ Sampaolo, PPM IV 519, #82–83, cubicolo (25), west wall. See Eric Moorman, "Rappresentazioni teatrali su *scaenae frontes* di quarto stile a Pompei," *Pompeii, Herculaneum, Stabiae* 1 (1983): 73–117, esp. 84–91 on the House of Apollo, here 85–86.

⁸¹ Valeria Sampaolo, "I 3,25," PPM I (1990): 86–109, at pp. 89–91, 93, #2–4, 6, where the fresco has deteriorated so that it is no longer discernable. Simon, "Apollo" 421; Karl Schefold, *Die Wände Pompejis: Topographisches Verzeichnis der Bildmotive* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1957), 13 agrees, thus correcting his earlier identification in *Pompejanische Malerei*.

⁸² Simon, LIMC II/1, p. 421, #420. Moorman, "Rappresentazioni teatrali," 85–86, calls the hypothesis of a pantomime "molto probabile." See Eleanor Leach, "Satyrs and Spectators: Reflections of Theatrical Settings in Third Style Mythological Continuous Narrative Painting," 81–84 and 335, esp. 83–84 in *I Temi Figurativi nella Pittura Parietale Antica (IV sec. a.C.–IV sec. d.C.)*. Atti del VI Convegno Internazionale sulla Pittura Parietale Antica (ed. Daniela Scagliarini Corlàita; Bologna: University Press, 1997).

⁸³ Valeria Sampaolo, "Casa di M. Gavius Rufus (VII 2,16–17)," PPM VI (1996): 530–85, here 565, #57; Naples Museum inventory 9449. L. Richardson Jr., *Pompeii: The Casa dei Dioscuri and its Painters* (Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome 23; Rome: G. Bardi, 1955), 120 with plate XIX describes the artist who painted this fresco.

feminine figure is clearly Venus, who in the house of Fabius Rufus (see below) holds a *flabellum* (fan) and is assisted by a cupid. Additional feminine figures are represented, one standing behind Venus, the other behind the seated male figure. The central figure, bathed in light, stands emphatically on a podium before a throne with a long torch in his left hand. Below him lies an animal whose identity is contested. Some see a panther, which would identify the figure as Dionysus, which would mean that the masculine figure seated on his right, who has a halo and seems to be undressing himself, would be Helios/Apollo. Simon, differently from Sampaolo, insists that this animal is a griffin (a lion body with wings and the head of a falcon).⁸⁴ Experts agree that this is a contest between two divinities of light being judged by a third, and since there is little evidence of such rivalry between Apollo and Venus, Sampaolo concludes that it is preferable to accept the hypothesis that Apollo judges between Venus and Hesperos, a rivalry recorded in a passage in Hyginus (*Astron.* 2.42,4):

Quarta stella est Veneris. . . . Hunc eundem Hesperum appellari . . . Nonnulli hunc Aurorae et Cephali filium dixerunt, pulchritudine multos praestantem. Ex qua re etiam cum Venere dicitur certasse, ut etiam Erastosthenes dicit. . . . [The fourth star is Venus . . . also called Hesperos. . . . Some say he is the son of Cephalus and Aurora, more beautiful than all the others. For this cause it is said, there was dissension with Venus, as Eratosthenes [a writer in the time of Ptolemy] Euergetes, 246–221 B.C.E. maintains. . . .]⁸⁵

This fresco seems to represent a moment in which the two divinities are removing the garments that had covered them so that Apollo can see their splendor.

4) The fresco in the Casa di M. Fabius Rufus (VII 16 [Ins. Or.], 22 (*salone absidato* 62), east wall, in situ; see **plate 6**).⁸⁶ This house

⁸⁴ Simon, LIMC II/1, 421, #421. See E. Simon, "Zur Bedeutung des Greifen in der Kunst der Kaiserzeit," *Latomus* 21 (1962): 749–80, Taf. XLVI–LI with Abb. 1–11, at 770–71, Taf. XLVII.4. "Who would want to believe, in the face of so many griffin scenes from early Roman times, that the griffin is hardly referred to in texts from that time?" (p. 761). Her n. 2 follows: "The only reference known to me is Vergil, *Ecl.*, 8.27." Her observation is relevant to the series of frescoes under discussion, interpreted only by the late reference in Hyginus.

⁸⁵ Hygini, *De Astronomia* (ed. Ghislaine Viré; Stuttgart: Teubner, 1992); C. Giulio Igino, *L'Astronomia: Introduzione, testo e traduzione*, a cura di Mariagrazia F. Vitobello (Bari: Adriatica editrice, 1988). See the previous note.

⁸⁶ Irene Bragantini, "Casa di M. Fabius Rufus (VII 16[Ins. Occ.],22)," PPM VII

or insula (here the distinction is meaningless) has three floors, and is on a bluff facing west toward the Bay of Naples. The room with our fresco is two floors high, and the apse, which is at the west end of the room facing the ocean, has three large windows on each level, a total of six (see Bragantini 950, #1). This apse is the only one in that area of the western bluff facing the ocean. All three zones of the three walls were painted against a black background in the years 50–55 C.E.; the house was not occupied after the earthquake in 62 (Solin 245). These paintings, then, are from the time of Claudius or Nero, so may be the earliest ones. The height of the room, the apse, the only one on that bluff, and the ocean view combined make the room itself exceptional.

On the east wall opposite the apse in the central zone, Apollo sits enthroned again, in this representation not surrounded by stage architecture. His upper body is nude and faces the front, while his legs are turned to his left; his cloak falls over both legs and covers him below his naval. He holds a torch in his left hand, but another one still burning lies in front of him; his head is wreathed. Simon points out that a(nother) griffin, often an attribute of Apollo, also sometimes of Nemesis and of the Sun god, sits to the right of Apollo's head on the arm of the marble throne.⁸⁷ This animal in the house of Fabius Rufus is quite clearly a griffin. This decides the issue debated above (under 3), whether the animal at the central figure's feet in the house of Gavius Rufus is a panther or a griffin: the central divinity in this series of frescoes, then, is Apollo, not Dionysus. In the upper zone immediately above Apollo is a representation of Leto and the swan, that is, Zeus, so Apollo's mother and his all-powerful divine father impregnating her (Bragantini 1089, #281; **plate 7**).⁸⁸ This black wall is rather heavy with divine power. On

(1997): 947–1125, here 1085, 1088, #273, 279. Renate Thomas, *Die Dekorationssysteme der römischen Wandmalerei von augusteischer bis in trajanische Zeit* (Mainz: Philipp von Zabern, 1995) Farbtafel 4.3. Heikki Solin, "Die Wandinschriften im sog. Haus des M. Fabius Rufus," in *Neue Forschungen in Pompeji* (ed. Bernard Andreae and Helmut Kyrieleis; Recklinghausen: Aurel Bongers, 1975), 243–72, who doubts (246–47) the identification of Fabius Rufus as the owner. By the way, Solin insists (249–50, 256) that writing was a skill of some men and women in the lower classes.

⁸⁷ Simon, LIMC II/1, 421, #421. Fausto e Felice Niccolini, *Le Case ed i Monumenti di Pompei: Disegnati e Discritti, Saggio introduttivo e aggiornamento critico di Stefano de Caro* (Naples, 1862 and Sorrento-Napoli: Franco Di Mauro, 2004), vol. 2, plate XXXIX clearly display two griffins on the thin columns above the head of Apollo in the Casa di Apollo.

⁸⁸ This relates the second part of my paper to the first part, which focused on

Apollo's left stands Venus, leaning with her left arm on a pillar and holding a fan in her left hand; she seems to be disrobing with her robe falling below her naval; a cupid or Eros is seen with his hands on her left shoulder. A dove stands at her feet. To the right Hesperos, with a halo, stands with his right arm raised high and his left arm horizontal, both hands grasping a robe seen behind him, so that he is facing front nude. An upright hydria (vase) is seen standing in the center at the bottom of the fresco. Bragantini⁸⁹ comments: "despite the diverse interpretation of Elia (RM 1962)⁹⁰ or the doubts recently expressed (Hijmans, 1995),⁹¹ the traditional interpretation of this scene as a *Sternenstreit*, a contest between the star of the day and the star of the night judged by Apollo, seems to be the one that best explains the attributes of the personages represented as engaged in contest in this scene (see Simon, LIMC), which does not necessarily reflect the version of the myth attested in literature."

5) House VIII 4,34, tablinum (4), east wall.⁹² Sampaolo notes that Helbig originally described this fresco as a competition between two divinities of light judged by a seated Dionysus, but as just noted, in this series of frescoes Simon has shown him to be Apollo. He has a halo, supports a long torch with his left arm, and with his raised right hand points toward the seated male figure on his left, a different choice than in the Casa di Apollo, which would indicate that the outcome of the contest was uncertain! Hesperos is the young man seated on the central figure's left, covered with a green mantel, a blue halo crowned by a star on his head and a shepherd's crook at his feet. Venus is standing on the central figure's right, unadorned and holding a garland between her hands. Two other feminine divinities behind rocks, each with a halo and nude above the waist (see Ovid, *Metam.* 2.341), assist the contest from on high, just as there are two additional feminine figures in the Gavius Rufus fresco (number 3 above).

Leto giving birth to Apollo and Artemis and the conflicts that their birth on Delos generated.

⁸⁹ Bragantini, "Fabius Rufus," 1089, #279 (my translation).

⁹⁰ Olga Elia, "Lo stibadio dionisiaco in pitture pompeiane," RM 69 (1962): 118–27 with Tav. 38–41.

⁹¹ Steven E. Hijmans, "Sol or Hesperus? A note on two unknown fragments of the 'Sternenstreit' in the Archaeological Museum of Naples," *Mededelingen van het Nederlands Instituut te Rome* 54 (1995): 52–60.

⁹² Valeria Sampaolo, "VIII 4,34," PPM VIII (1998): 531–46, at p. 539, #9, from an early drawing.

Bragantini refers to the recent modification of the traditional identification by Leach,⁹³ signifying the scene in relation to other frescoes in the same room of the Casa di M. Fabius Rufus (number 4 above). Leach identifies the personages in the fresco with Aphrodite and Phaethon (an alternate name for both Hesperos and Phosphoros).⁹⁴ The union between the two, an inappropriate/negative union between a goddess and a mortal, is the cause of Phaethon's fatal driving of Helios' carriage.⁹⁵ The most familiar version is by Ovid, *Metam.* 1.748–2.400.⁹⁶ I select a few sentences (from *Metam.* 2.150–200) to give the flavor:

⁹³ Eleanor Winsor Leach, "The Iconography of the Black Salone in the Casa di Fabio Rufo," *Kölner Jahrbuch für Vor- und Frühgeschichte* 24 (1991): 105–112. I thank John R. Clarke for originally referring me to this article.

⁹⁴ Moorman, "Rappresentazioni teatrali," 84–91 agrees. When Aune, *Revelation*, 2:667, lists versions of the combat myth in the Greek world, he includes "Helios and Phaethon (particularly important for Rev. 12)." I offer him my study as a development of the idea he expressed in this parenthesis.

⁹⁵ Leach interprets other frescos in the same room as representing appropriate/positive unions between male gods and mortal women. In the same room (Bragantini, #290, south wall) Bacchus/Dionysus is represented appearing to Ariadne. On the north wall (Bragantini, pp. 1079, 1082, #262, 267) is a representation of Neptune/Posidon, who sits holding a torch in his left hand, and Amydone, the Danaid, standing while the deity pulls away her mantle exposing her. At her feet is an overturned hydria. Leach did not interpret the fresco of Leto "in flight" and the swan (= Zeus), the original of which has been ascribed to the sculptor Timotheos. On the other hand, she incorporated visual elements (vases, Eros, the Hediades [the female figures beside Apollo's throne, Phaethon's grieving sisters?]) in her interpretation that others have ignored.

⁹⁶ Trans. Goold in LCL. For Ovid's ekphrasis of the cosmos see Hans Bernsdorff, "Verbindungen zwischen Kunstwerksekphrasis und Haupthandlung: Phaethon vor der Sonnenburg (met. 2,1–18)," *Kunstwerke und Verwandlungen: Vier Studien zu ihrer Darstellung im Werk Ovids* (Studien zur klassischen Philologie 117; New York: Peter Lang, 2000), 13–31; regrettably, he fails to cite the Pompeian frescoes, which could have strengthened his arguments. Graffito 8 in the House of Fabius Rufus concerns astronomy (Solin [cited n. 86] 256–62, who cites e.g. Strabo, *Geog.* 2.2.2–3). The fact of this inscription supports the cosmological interpretation of the Apollo fresco given in the text above. Compare Lucian, *Dialogues of the Gods* 24 (25).278–80. U. Wilamowitz-Möllendorff, "Phaethon," *Hermes* XVIII (1883): 396–434, concludes (p. 422), "We must name the star in the Pompeian pictures Phaethon." Differing versions are discussed by James Diggle, *Euripides' Phaethon, Edited with Prolegomena and Commentary* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1970), e.g. Euripides includes Phaethon's marriage, perhaps to a daughter of Helios, some argue to Aphrodite, but Ovid does not. Compare Christopher Collard, M. J. Cropp, and K. H. Lee, *Euripides: Selected Fragmentary Plays* (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1995), 1:195–239: "Phaethon." Also E. Peterson, "Phaethon im Palast des Helios," *RM* 11 (1895): 67–73, so in Nero's Golden House, the house of the sun-god! For the Neronian visual representation of Phaethon see Leach, "Casa di Fabio Rufo," figs. 5–6. For further characterization of Nero's Golden House, see David L. Balch, "Zeus, Vengeful Protector of the

But the lad [Phaethon] has already mounted the light chariot [of Apollo] . . . and thanks his unwilling father for the gift. . . . Meanwhile the sun's swift horses . . . dashed forth. . . . When they feel this [Phaethon's light grip on the reigns], the team run wild . . . The driver is panic-stricken. . . . Then for the first time the cold Bears grew hot with the rays of the sun. . . . But when the unhappy Phaëthon looked down from the top of heaven . . . he grew pale, his knees trembled with sudden fear. . . . To add to his panic fear, he sees scattered everywhere in the sky strange figures of huge and savage beasts. There is one place where the Scorpion bends out his arms. . . . When the boy sees this creature reeking with black poisonous sweat, and threatening to sting him with his curving tail, bereft of wits from chilling fear, drown he dropped the reins. . . .

More specifically, "the Moon in amazement sees her brother's [the sun's] horses running below her own, and the scorched clouds smoke" (2.208–09). "The earth bursts into flame . . . and splits into deep cracks, and its moisture is all dried up. The meadows are burned to white ashes; the trees are consumed. . . . Great cities perish with their walls, and the vast conflagration reduces whole nations to ashes. The woods are ablaze with the mountains. . . ." (213–14; see Rev 7:3; 8:7; 16:8–9; 18:9) "Aetna is blazing boundlessly with flames now doubled" (220; see Rev 6:12; 16:18). "Nor do rivers . . . remain unscathed" (241). "The fish dive to the lowest depths . . .; the dead bodies of sea-calves float" (265–68; see Rev 8:9; 16:3). Earth personified fears dying by fire (272–300), saying "Look around, the heavens are smoking from pole to pole. If the first shall weaken these, the homes of the gods will fall in ruins. . . . If the sea perish and the land and the realms of the sky, then are we hurled back to primeval chaos" (298–99; see Rev 6:13–14). Finally, Jove restores Arcadia's springs and rivers, grass, trees and forests (401–08) and again chases a nymph.

The possibility of such a cosmic catastrophe would have frightened (and Ovid knew, entertained) Roman audiences, much as the tsunami in the Pacific has recently horrified our world. Some art historians argue that the cosmic contest in this series of domestic frescoes is between Hesperos and Venus (Herbig, Schefold, Simon), others that the cosmic disaster results from Phaethon taking of his

Political and Domestic Order: Frescoes in Dining Rooms N and P of the House of the Vettii in Pompeii, Mark 13:12–13, and 1 Clement 6.2," in *Picturing the New Testament*, (ed. Annette Weissenrieder, Frederike Wendt, and Petra von Gemünden; WUNT 2/193; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 67–95 with 9 plates.

father's sun chariot for a spin in relation to Aphrodite (Wilamowitz-Möllandorf, Moorman, Leach).⁹⁷ As Bragantini observes, in either case these frescoes represent a *Sternenstreit*, a contest among the stars in which viewers see an epiphany of Apollo.

These painters may have mixed the two myths:⁹⁸ Hesperos and Phaethon were, after all, alternate names for the same star. Apollo pointing at Venus, or in the fifth house discussed above, pointing at Hesperos as they disrobe indicates a stellar beauty contest. But the burning sun torch lying at Apollo's feet in the black salon of the House of Fabius Rufus (see **plate 6**) suggests the story of Phaethon's flaming descent; that second burning sun torch would supply no added meaning if the subject were simply a beauty contest (see Euripides, *Phaethon*, lines 252–269, ed. Diggle). Further, Leach points out that the two additional feminine figures in both the Gavius Rufus fresco and in house VIII 4,34 are Heliades, Phaethon's sisters who mourn his death (see Ovid, *Met.* 2.340–66).⁹⁹ Finally, Diodorus Sic. (5.23.2, first century B.C.E.) states that the story of Phaethon was “told by many poets and historians.” Assuming again that assimilationists in Asia imitated the aesthetic values of Imperial art in their houses, John's hearers/viewers would have had such visual representations of a stellar contest/catastrophy—nevertheless controlled by Apollo (Augustus, Nero)—before their eyes in their own or their patron's or their master's houses.

Simon, supported by Moorman and Leach, suggests (see n. 82) that Nero pantomimed such cosmic competition on stage in his Golden House, with himself as Apollo, Lord of the sun torch/sun chariot. Such imperial pretensions would have offered the provincial, creative Jewish Christian author of the Apocalypse visual images to subvert. The assimilationists among John's hearers/viewers would have wanted Apollo/Nero to keep political/economic/cosmic order! John judged the Roman emperor's rule rather to be cosmic chaos. Who is the God whose messengers can throw the great red Imperial dragon out of heaven and defeat it on earth?

⁹⁷ For a longer list of authors involved in the discussion see Hijmans, “Sol or Hesperus,” 55–56. I note in addition that Phaethon is one of the small number of myths popularly sculpted on Roman sarcophagi. See Robert Turcan, “Les sarcophages romains et le problème du symbolisme funéraire,” ANRW II.16.2 (1978): 1700–35; Koch and Sichtermann, *Römische Sarkophage*, 180–83.

⁹⁸ Woodford, *Images of Myths in Classical Antiquity*, chap. 15: “Confusing One Myth with Another.”

⁹⁹ Leach, “Fabio Rufo,” 109–10.

Conclusions and Theses

I conclude with five theses. First, Imperial Roman art was imitated in the provinces (I. Baldassarre), in Asia, but local artists (Apelles, Nikias) were also creative (A. Wallace-Hadrill). John was subverting Imperial visual representations that many Asian Christians would have seen and that assimilationist Christians would have valued aesthetically and politically, perhaps also religiously. This would have been one of the differences for which Aune and Trebilco argue (see nn. 3–5, 71) between John and many of his readers/hearers.

Second, myths consist of all their versions (David Aune), although the verbal mythical pictures in Rev 12 have extraordinarily close ties to the Egyptian myth of Isis-Horus-Seth and to the Greek myth of Leto-Apollo-*Artemis*-Typhon as utilized in Roman imperial propaganda (A. Yarbro Collins). In the context of this paper, this thesis claims that myths consist in all their textual *and their visual* representations.

Third, Thomas Schneider's recent research has made new Egyptian texts available to New Testament scholars, three of which are connected narratives. Texts D and E from the Temple at Edfu expand the narrative parallels to the myths in Rev 12, e.g. the birth pangs/shouts of both women are mentioned, and text E narrates a multi-stage war, analogous to the cosmic disasters that spiral through Revelation. This means that 1) the myth of a pregnant woman threatened by a monster and 2) a second myth of a dragon rebelling against divine order had been combined two centuries before John, and they were recorded in a temple where the birth and victory of Horus over the monster Seth were celebrated in worship.

Fourth, the most important thesis of this paper is that the Imperial visual representation of a pregnant Io (Greek)/Isis (Egyptian)/Venus (Roman) threatened by a monster (Argos, Seth/Typhon) commissioned by an angry deity (Hera) was popular in the Temple of Isis, in the market, and in houses of Pompeii, an unimportant, middle-sized city, as well as on the island of Delos. Most important, this visual representation was painted in the so-called House of Livia, Augustus' wife, in Rome: it was an Imperial visual representation, which means that similar Imperial aesthetics would have been appreciated in the houses of a larger, wealthier, politically important provincial capital like Ephesus, where the original painter of Io, Nikias, was appreciated, and in an art center like Pergamon. John's portrait in Rev 12, sketched on the island of Patmos for viewers in Ephesus/Asia, of a

woman bearing a son threatened by a monster, is a visual/verbal representation that subverts the Imperial visual representation of a pregnant Io/Isis/Venus. The question is: Who is the Mother of God, who is also our Mother? And who is Her Child, Augustus or the slain Lamb, and who are Her other children, assimilationists or non-conformists in Roman culture?

Fifth, a series of five domestic frescoes in Pompeii visually present an epiphany of Apollo who judges a contest between two star divinities, who are presenting their claim to beauty by unrobing before him. The repeated epiphanies in Revelation (e.g. 1:9–20; 4:1–5:14; 11:19–12:9; 19:1–10) subvert the visual representation of an epiphany of Apollo = the emperor (Nero) judging the stars.¹⁰⁰ Historians of Roman domestic art disagree whether the two stars in a contest with each other in this series of domestic paintings are Hesperos and Venus or rather Apollo's son Phaethon in relation to a daughter of Helios or Aphrodite. In either case viewers see a popular *Sternenstreit*, a contest among the stars, an analogy to the cosmic catastrophes John verbally presents in the pages of the Apocalypse. These visual domestic representations are not the ultimate source of John's apocalyptic language, but the analogies would have made his verbal pictures less strange, more familiar, to Greco-Roman readers. The question is, who is the God whose messengers can throw the dragon out of heaven and defeat it on earth, Nero or the Lamb who was slain?¹⁰¹

¹⁰⁰ In an *arcosolium* in the Catacomb of Domitilla, "the lunette on the back wall depicts an evocative scene of *maiestas Domini* with Christ enthroned between the two princes of the apostles, in front of a *capsa* of volumes (fig. 78). A mandorla of light, composed of glass paste of tesserae of brilliant green, sets the representation within a visionary state, alluding to the epiphany of the Logos in reference to Apoc. 4.2–3." Fabrizio Bisconti, "The Decoration of Roman Catacombs," in *The Christian Catacombs of Rome: History, Decoration, Inscriptions* (ed. V. Ficocchi Nicolai, F. Bisconti, and D. Mazzoleni; Regensburg: Schnell & Steiner, 2002, 2nd ed.), 71–145, here 74–75.

¹⁰¹ But even this formulation has easily been interpreted to legitimate *Christian* imperial violence. See Jürgen Moltmann, "Friedenstiften und Drachentöten im Christentum," *EoT* 64.4 (2004): 285–94. I am grateful to Frederick E. Brenk, S.J., and to Giovanni Casadio for critiques of this article. Citations of Egyptian sources in the footnotes exhibit my indebtedness to the library of the Pontifical Biblical Institute, Rome, and to the librarian, James L. Dugan, S.J. The libraries of the German Archaeological Institute, the British School, and the American Academy in Rome have been exciting resources for Greco-Roman art history. I thank my hosts at the Waldensian Seminary. Finally, my research time came from the generous sabbatical policy at Brite Divinity School.

PROLEGOMENOUS REFLECTIONS ON OPHIDIAN ICONOGRAPHY, SYMBOLOLOGY, AND NEW TESTAMENT THEOLOGY

James H. Charlesworth

Far too often scholars assume that the meaning of the serpent in Rev 12 defines the symbol of this animal in the Bible and especially in the New Testament. The purpose of this short article is to clarify that while the serpent often has negative connotations and denotations, in the Middle East and in the Bible it frequently symbolizes something good. The serpent has symbolized fertility, fruitfulness, energy, power, beauty, goodness, creation, light, chronos, kingship, divinity, unity (or oneness), magic, mystery, life, water, the soul, health, transcendence, rejuvenation, immortality, riches, wonder, awe, wisdom and ancestor worship. The serpent often is used to represent God's messenger, the cosmos, the chthonic regions and is the quintessential guardian.¹

1. *The Greek and Roman World of the New Testament*

With the exception of the Egyptian religion in antiquity, the Greeks—followed closely behind by the Romans—employed serpent symbolism the most. Both the Greeks and the Romans, of course, were deeply influenced by Egyptian ophidian symbolism.

Ophidian or anguine iconography appears on the painted walls of homes in Pompeii, on pithoi (large storage jars), on ornately decorated jars (like the Athenian red-figured hydria [water jars]), on coins, and through words in epics, poems, and official documents. The serpent appears characteristically on statues of Asclepius, Hygieia,

¹ For a full discussion of the issues broached in this essay in honor of my friend, David E. Aune, who frequently saw me working on ophidian symbology in the École Biblique library, consult J. H. Charlesworth, *The Serpent: A Symbol of Life or Death?* (AB; New York: Doubleday, forthcoming).

and Hermes (Mercury), and also sometimes with Apollo and Zeus. Of course, the depiction of the war between the gods and the giants, reveal the latter with anguipedes (serpents as legs). This is evident on the Pergamum altar and was most likely expressed in bronze on the upper level of the Pantheon, before its 40,000 pounds were recycled to decorate the Vatican.

It is impressive to note briefly how ophidian or anguine symbolism permeates Greek and Roman legends and myths, shaping Hellenistic culture. Demeter and her daughter, Persephone, are often depicted sending Triptolemus to humans with the gift of wheat. He is often shown seated on a chariot drawn by raised serpents.²

Well-known on buildings and painted vases, beginning at least in the eighth century B.C.E., are depictions of Medusa. She and the other gorgons are shown as women with serpents rising from their hairs. Serpents are the ones who reveal to Melampus the languages of animals; he thus becomes the first human with prophetic powers. The serpents had licked his ears when he was sleeping. Scylla had six snaky heads. Basilisk is the king of serpents. Asclepius almost always appears with a staff around which a serpent is coiled, and Hermes is associated with the *caduceus* (two raised serpents facing each other).

Ovid describes Phaëton's ill-fated ride into the heavens on a chariot. The venture resulted in cosmic disasters; in particular, the serpent, which had been coiled harmless around the North Pole, rises with rage. In order to avoid the advances of Peleus, Thetis changes into fire, monsters, and serpents. When Priam's wife was pregnant with Paris she dreamed of giving birth to a torch from which streamed hissing serpents. When Laokoon, Poseidon's priest, during the Trojan War, warned about the Wooden Horse the Greeks had left, he and his two sons were strangled by two massive serpents that had been called out of the sea, presumably by the warlike Athena (who is often depicted with serpents on her chest).

In the legend of the Golden Fleece, perhaps older than the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*,³ Aectes hangs the fleece in a grove that was guarded

² See the Greek vase in the British Museum numbered BM GR 1873.8-20.375 (Vase E140). For a published drawing, see L. Burn, *Greek Myths* (London, 1990; 1999), 9.

³ So L. Burn, in *Greek Myths*, 59.

by a serpent. Before Jason can obtain the golden fleece, he must defeat armed warriors who originate from the teeth of the dreadful serpent, who had guarded Ares' pool but had been defeated by Kadmos. The maenads are women who became ecstatic during the worship of Dionysos; they often are depicted as those who charmed serpents.

The founding of great cities is recorded in legends and myths featuring serpents. The Pythian Games celebrated how Apollo founded Delphi by slaying the enormous serpent, Python, with his arrows, and helped bring order out of chaos after the great flood. Of course, the Tiber Island is the sacred site chosen by the serpent, brought from Epidauros; thus Asclepius could save Rome from a plague.

This aside reminds us that when Rome militarily conquered Greece, she was intellectually conquered by Greek culture, especially in the spheres of art, iconography, and symbology (the world represented and sometimes created by a symbol). The words of Horace (*Epistles* 2.1.156–57) are worth citing:

Graecia capta ferum victorem cepit
et artes intulit agresti Latio

Captive Greece captured her untamed victor,
And brought the arts to countrified Latium.

The word “untamed” also represents wild and savage. The adjective “countrified” intends to evoke thoughts about the rustic, boorish, and agrarian world of the Romans. The noun “Latium” denotes the area near Rome. Both Greece and Rome are portrayed as “captured.” What does this signify? As R. Turcan states, Horace’s vision primarily means that “Greek civilization was a daughter of the East, as Roman civilization was the product of Greek education.”⁴

Before proceeding further with an examination of the meaning of ophidian iconography and symbology in the Greek and Roman worlds, we should bring into focus that there are forty-one names for snake taxonomy in Greek.⁵ The Greeks also had a word for “belonging to serpents.” In fact that same word, *ophiakos*, also denoted “a form of leprosy in which the patient sheds his skin like a snake.” The richness of Greek vocabulary with regard to snakes is remarkable;

⁴ R. Turcan, *The Cults of the Roman Empire* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), 2.

⁵ See J. H. Charlesworth, “Phenomenology, Symbology, and Lexicography: The Amazingly Rich Vocabulary for ‘Serpent’ in Ancient Greek,” *RB* 111 (2004): 499–515.



Bronze serpent staff. Probably from a statue of Asclepius. Courtesy of S. Moussaieff. JHC

the Greeks had words for the “food of serpents,” “serpent-eating” (which can be combined to denote various concepts like “serpent-chaser,” “serpent-killer,” “serpent fighter,” “snake-charmer,” and others). They could denote with one word “serpent-tailed,” “serpent-eating,” and “serpent-bearing.”⁶ It is certain that we cannot represent in English the exact meanings of some Greek terms and that the Greeks knew more about serpents than English-speaking people. The ancient Greeks were different from us; in many ways they were in closer touch with nature and our earth than we have been.

To bring into clarity some of the Greek (and Roman) perspectives on serpent symbolism, it is best to focus on Asclepios (Greek) and Aesculapius (Latin).⁷

Asclepius, more than any other god in Hellenistic culture is associated with the serpent. While serpents are customarily shown with Hermes, they appear as a caduceus. Moreover, the serpents are only stylized. Asclepius is depicted and was imagined to appear as a full serpent. He is almost always portrayed with a serpent entwined around his staff.

Asclepius appears first in literature as a human and then he is elevated to be a god. In Homer’s *Iliad* (2.729), which was written

⁶ See LSJM 1278 and 1279.

⁷ I shall use the popular English hybrid: Asclepius.

sometime before the seventh century B.C.E.,⁸ Asclepius is mentioned in the catalogue of the Achaean army as the father of Machaon and Podaleirios.⁹ Homer's portrayal of Asclepius as a human physician is altered by Hesiod, who refers to him as semi-divine, or as a god.¹⁰ In fact, it seems that Hesiod is the first one to refer to Asclepius as a healing god.

According to legends, Asclepius dies when Zeus destroys him with a thunderbolt, because he had raised the dead (see Pliny, *Natural History*).¹¹ In ancient lore antedating even Homer, Asclepius was perhaps originally a deity—an earth deity or earth daimon—who healed the sick. His means for healing were dreams which informed the one asleep of the proper means and methods for recovery of health. This method is related to incubation.¹² The devotees (the incubants) performed some rituals to purify themselves, then they entered the temple of the god for various periods. The object was to sleep in the god's temple and to receive information, usually a cure, through a dream. Incubation was especially central to the Asclepian cult. There were Asclepian shrines or temples for incubation at Epidaurus, but also at Cos, Lebene, Pergamum, Rome, and Smyrna. Peloponnesians had a penchant for building Asclepieia, as we know from a recent survey by S. G. Stauroopoulos.¹³

⁸ According to the *Iliad* 12, Hector, leader of the Trojans, rejects the idea that a serpent that has just bitten an eagle and thus escapes can be an omen. The event occurred before the Trojan army.

⁹ See A. Gehring, *Index Homericus* (Leipzig, 1891–95; reprinted in Hildesheim and New York, 1970). Even better, see H. Dunbar, *A Complete Concordance to the Iliad of Homer* (reprinted by Olms in Hildesheim and New York, 1983). Also, see H. Dunbar, *A Complete Concordance to the Odyssey of Homer* (Oxford, 1880; reprinted in Hildesheim and New York, 1971).

¹⁰ See J. R. Tebben, *Hesiod-Konkordanz* (Alpha-Omega Reihe A; Hildesheim and New York, 1977). Also see, W. M. Minton, *Concordance to the Hesiodic Corpus* (Leiden, 1976).

¹¹ Pliny, *Natural History* Book 29.1; see the edition by W. H. S. Jones (LCL; vol. 8; London and Cambridge, Mass., 1963), pp. 182–83. Also see, P. Rosumek, *Concordantia in C. Plinii Secundi Naturalem Historiam* (7 vols.; Alpha-Omega 55.1–7; Hildesheim, New York, 1996); for *anguis*, see vol. 1:778.

¹² See M. Hamilton, *Incubation* (Laurinburg, N.C., 1906). For bibliographical information on the study of incubation and a succinct summary, see T. A. Brady and J. E. Fontenrose "Incubation," in *The Oxford Classical Dictionary* (ed. S. Hornblower and A. Spawforth; Oxford, 1996), 43–44.

¹³ S. G. Stauroopoulos, *The Asklepieia of Peloponnesia* (Athens, 2000 [in Greek]).

Celsus' *On Medicine* (14–37 C.E.) helps us understand the evolution of the Asclepian myth. He wrote that Asclepius was “celebrated as the most ancient authority” on medicine. He “was numbered among the gods (*in deorum numerum receptus est*),” because “he cultivated this science, as yet rude and vulgar, with a little more than common refinement.” His sons, Podalirius and Machaon, were not magicians or physicians who could heal all diseases. As Homer stated, they were able to heal, during the Trojan War, only battle wounds “by the knife and medicaments.”¹⁴

As intimated earlier, Asclepius appears to the Greeks and Romans as a serpent.¹⁵ The imaginative portrait of Asclepius with a staff around which a serpent is entwined appears as early as the fifth century, and perhaps the sixth century, B.C.E. Marcus Aurelius (Roman Emperor from 161–180 C.E.), though he was imbued with Stoicism, occasionally thought of himself as Asclepius (actually Aesculapius). He liked to be seen as a god holding a staff like Asclepius' staff.

Some guidance in perceiving the meaning of anguine symbol in the Asclepian cult is provided by texts. For example, Q. Ogulnius has a dream in which Asclepius appears; here are the pertinent words of Ovid (43 B.C.E. to 17 or 18 C.E.):¹⁶

Fear not! I shall come and leave my shrine. Only look upon this serpent which twines about my staff (*hunc modo serpentem, baculum qui nexibus ambit*), and fix it on your sight that you may know it. I shall change myself to this, but shall be larger (*sed maior ero*) and shall seem as great as celestial bodies should be when they change.¹⁷

Thus the God of healing, Asclepius, was envisioned as a serpent by the contemporaries of the Evangelists.

¹⁴ *On Medicine* Prooemium 2–3. See Celsus, *De Medicina* (ed. and trans. W. G. Spencer; LCL; London and Cambridge, Mass., 1971), 1:2–3.

¹⁵ Edelstein summarizes his study of Asclepius with the conclusion that “Asclepius was a ‘special god,’ created by men to be in charge of one task alone, that of healing.” E. J. Edelstein and L. Edelstein, *Asclepius* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1945; 1988), 2:91. Also see, A. Esser, “Asklepios und die Schlange,” *FF* 17/18 (1948): 196–198.

¹⁶ R. J. Deferrari, et al., *A Concordance of Ovid* (2 vols.; Washington, 1939; reprinted in Hildesheim and New York, 1968).

¹⁷ Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 15.658–62. The text and translation is taken from E. J. Edelstein and L. Edelstein, *Asclepius*, 1:435–41. Also see Ovid, *Metamorphoses* (trans. R. Humphries; Bloomington, 1957), 385. Also see Kerényi, *Asklepios: Archetypal Image of the Physician's Existence* (trans. R. Manheim; Bollingen Series 65/3; New York, 1959), 10.

What then did the serpent and the staff symbolize in antiquity? In *De slangestaf van Asklepios als symbool van de Geneeskunde*, J. Schouten provides some thoughtful reflections. He understands the Asclepian symbolism of the serpent to denote the following:

Originally it was an independent chthonical symbol of the ever renewing and indestructible life of the earth. As such it was also the symbol of deliverance from disease, in other words: a healing symbol. It should be noted that in the antique view of life it is by no means a symbol in our modern sense, but rather an expression of direct experience of reality.¹⁸

It is this in-depth indwelling of our phenomenal world that is so essential in perceiving the meaning of serpent symbolism. The serpent is of the earth and crawls on the earth. The snake does not pound the earth as horses or as we do when walking. The snake also often darts into and out of the earth.

What then does the serpent-staff symbolize?¹⁹ Again, listen to the reflections of Schouten:

From times immemorial the staff has been the symbol of vegetative growth: it represented the everlasting life of the earth in all its aspects; it therefore symbolized recovery from disease, in other words: deliverance from death.²⁰

The serpent entwined around the staff symbolized what the human most required: health, healing from sickness and injuries, and protection from death.

Hygieia, the daughter²¹ of Asclepius “who is worth as much as all” his other offspring.²² She is the goddess of health and hygiene.²³ It is from her name that the word “hygiene” derives. She is often depicted with a serpent eating from her hand or from a bowl that

¹⁸ J. Schouten, *De slangestaf van Asklepios als symbool van de Geneeskunde* (Utrecht: Schotanus & Jens, 1963), 184.

¹⁹ K.-H. Hunger seeks to comprehend what the Asclepian staff means in communication; see his *Der Askulapstab* (Hochschul-Skripten: Medien 7; Berlin, 1978).

²⁰ Schouten, *De slangestaf van Asklepios*, 184.

²¹ Sometimes Hygieia is incorrectly reported to be the wife of Asclepius.

²² Aristides, *Oratio 38*, 22; see Edelstein and Edelstein, *Asclepius*, 1:133. For the text of Aristides, see C. A. Behr and F. W. Lenz, *P. Aelii Aristides Opera Quae Exstant Omnia* (2 vols.; Leiden, 1976–1980). Also see P. Aelius Aristides, *The Complete Works* (ed. C. A. Behr; 2 vols.; Leiden, 1981/1986).

²³ For bibliography and a succinct discussion of Hygieia, see Z. Go, “Hygieia,” in *LIMC* (ed. H. C. Ackerman and J.-R. Gisler; vols.; Zurich, 1981–1997), 5.1:554–73.



Hygieia. Courtesy: The Hermitage JHC

she is holding. This image appears in statutes²⁴ and on coins celebrating her cult.²⁵ Some of these coins were minted at Tiberias during the time when Trajan was Emperor (98–117 C.E.), at Neapolis (Shechem) during the reign of Antoninus Pius (137–61 C.E.), and at Aelia Capitolina in the third century C.E.²⁶ Coiled serpents often appear on coins symbolizing the cult of Demeter and of Roman emperors.²⁷

In summary, we have obtained some insights into how ophidian or anguine symbolism was pervasive in the Greek and Roman world. The symbol of the serpent was also widely appreciated in Persia, Egypt, and elsewhere. The serpent denoted not only evil and death but also, and more prevalently, good and life—as well as other positive meanings, especially, health, healing, and rejuvenation (or the regaining of some youth).

It is not easy to ascertain the possible meanings of an ophidian or anguine symbol. We should neither delimit the possible meanings

²⁴ See esp. the photograph of the statue of Hygieia in Rhodes from about 140 C.E. in Kerényi, *Der Göttliche Arzt*, 68.

²⁵ No mention of the snake is found in the Orphic Hymn to Hygieia (68).

²⁶ Y. Meshorer, *The Coinage of Aelia Capitolina* (Jerusalem, 1989), 114, 56–67. See esp. the anguine iconography on the reverse of coin no. 175 (p. 115).

²⁷ K. Butcher, *Roman Provincial Coins* (London, 1988) see esp. 67, 68, 78, 87.

of serpent symbolism nor read our own concepts into it. A serpent might represent a threat or danger, but it also—more likely—denoted a goddess or some concept such as divinity, life, health, healing, beauty, and new life. The artist might have chosen one or several meanings. The one who purchased the symbol, and those who saw it, were certainly free to add additional meanings to the image. The symbol might have at the same time meant something evil and something good. Serpent iconography might also signify an ambiguity or a possible *double entendre*.

2. *A Selection of Pericopae in the New Testament*

Only five of the forty-one nouns in ancient Greek to denote various types of snakes appear in the Greek New Testament.²⁸ This statistic, 5/41, should not seem surprising. The documents in the New Testament are theological works and not zoological treatises such as a *De Natura Animalium*. Moreover, the Greek chosen as a vehicle by the New Testament authors was designed to convert the masses. Only in rare occasions (as in Luke's prologue) was the Greek directed to elite and intellectually advanced persons. This observation should be combined with the recognition that many New Testament authors knew and did occasionally use sophisticated Greek (e.g. Lk 1:1–4, Rom, and Heb; contrast Rev, whose author thought in Aramaic and Hebrew but wrote in Greek).

The five Greek nouns for snake or serpent that appear in the New Testament corpus are ἄσπις (“asp,” Rom 3:13), δράκων (“dragon,” Rev 12:3, 4, 7 [*bis*], 9, 13, 16, 17; 13:2, 4, 11; 16:13; 20:2),²⁹ ἑρπετόν (“snake,” Acts 10:12; 11:6; Rom 1:23; James 3:7), ἔχιδνα (“viper,” Mt 3:7; 12:34; 23:33; Luke 3:7; Acts 28:3),³⁰ and ὄφις (“snake” or “serpent,” 15 times in the NT [including Mk 16:8]).³¹

²⁸ See K. Aland, *Vollständige Konkordanz zum Griechischen Neuen Testament* (3 vols.; Berlin/New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1978–1983).

²⁹ See P. Joüon, “Le Grand Dragon,” *RSR* 17 (1927): 444–46; B. Renz, *Der orientalische Schlangendrache* (Augsburg, 1930); W. Foerster, “δράκων,” *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (ed. G. Kittel and G. Friedrich; trans. G. W. Bromiley; 10 vols.; Grand Rapids, 1964–1976), 3:281–83. The nouns ἄσπις and ἑρπετόν do not receive a separate entry in *TDNT*.

³⁰ See Foerster, “ἔχιδνα,” *TDNT* 3:815–16.

³¹ See Foerster, “ὄφις,” *TDNT* 5:566–71.

2.1. *Revelation*

The “serpent” has positive and negative meanings in the New Testament. The negative meanings seem alone to have impressed the exegetes and commentators.³² Clearly our western culture has too often featured sin as a serpent or as a human entwined by an evil serpent.³³ The key passages are in Revelation. The central text, as implied at the outset, is Rev 12. In this chapter, the “serpent,” the dragon, is equated with Satan and the Devil. The setting is a war in heaven; Michael and his angels fight against “the dragon” and his angels (cf. 1QM). After Michael and his angels win, there is no place for Satan and the Devil—“the dragon.” Thus, the author of Revelation offers this stunning equation: “And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, the one who is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole civilized world. He was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him” (Rev 12:9). The author of Revelation has inherited and stressed only the concept of the serpent as a negative symbolic meaning, emphasizing the serpent as the symbol of the Devil, God’s Antagonist, and Liar or Deceiver.

2.2. *The Synoptics*

The most stunning use of positive ophidian symbolism found in the Synoptics is attributed to Jesus. He sends his disciples out “as sheep in the midst of wolves” and instructs them to be “wise as serpents and innocent as doves” (Mt 10:16). This is a most intriguing passage that deserves a separate and detailed study that is informed by ancient serpent symbolism. Now, only three points may be clarified. First, the symbolic association of serpents with doves antedates Jesus

³² In L. Réau’s *Iconographie de l’art chrétienne* (1955), under animals as symbols of Christ, we are told that the following animals symbolized Christ: the lamb, the dove, the fish, the hart (or stag), the peacock, the eagle, the ostrich, the weasel, “le Bélier,” the scapegoat, “le Caladre,” “la Carista,” the cock, the dolphin, the griffin, the lobster, the watersnake, the unicorn, the lion, the lynx, the pelican, the phoenix, “la Sauterelle,” the serpent, the bull, and the calf. Lost in the forest may be the living sprout: “Le serpent est presque toujours l’image du Démon; cependant il peut, dans certains cas, signifier le Christ” (p. 98).

³³ See the image of the personification of sin from the Chancel of Salerno (second half of the 12th cent.) in W. Kemp, “Schlange, Schlangen,” *Lexicon der christlichen Ikonographie* (1974, 1990), 4:79.

by at least 1500 years.³⁴ For example, serpents and doves appear on incense stands which have been found at Beit Shan. The serpents seem to denote Spring and life, as well as the appearance of new life. Second, since Jesus is depicted sending his disciples out as sheep among wolves, his injunction to be like serpents may mirror the serpent symbolizing the Guardian. Wolves eat sheep and the disciples need protection. Third, Jesus' saying brings out an aspect of the pre-70 Jewish symbolic meaning of the serpent. The serpent represents wisdom. Jesus may be alluding, or the Evangelist having him allude, to Prov 30:18–19. The serpent as a symbol of shrewdness and wisdom appears in many Jewish apocryphal works,³⁵ and is abundantly clear in the Septuagint rendering of Gen 3:1. Most likely Matthew's choice of words—φρόνιμοι ὡς οἱ ὄφεις, be "wise as serpents"—was shaped in light of the Septuagint's version of Gen 3:1, ὁ δὲ ὄφις ἦν φρονιμώτατος, "and the serpent was the wisest. . . ." Jesus is not therefore mixing metaphors; he is not pointing to a deceptive serpent. He represents ancient Palestinian culture, in which many imagined serpents and doves together in a grand symbology in which the serpent is wise, alert, and shrewd.³⁶

The appendix to Mark, 16:9–20, preserves a famous reference to serpents that has been taken literally by fundamentalists in some southern sections of the United States. In "the longer ending of Mark," the resurrected Jesus tells his eleven disciples that "the one who believes and is baptized" will be able to "pick up serpents" and not be harmed (16:18). It is interesting to observe that poisonous snakes are denoted by ὄφις and not by ἄσπις ("asp," as in Rom 3:13) or ἔχιδνα ("viper," as in Mt 3:7; 12:34; 23:33; Luke 3:7; Acts 28:3).

The compiler of this appendix was influenced by Greek mythology. Dionysius, who appears as a serpent, gave his devotees the power to handle serpents. Thus, like Athena, they, the Bacchantes, were possessed and could hold deadly snakes. Most likely in Mk 16:18 the serpent primarily symbolizes the Death-Giver.

³⁴ The image of the serpent often is seen with a bird. I mentioned earlier that the serpent together with the dove appears on ceramics, especially those found at Beth Shan. Also see W. Fauth, "Widder, Schlange und Vogel am heiligen Baum zur ikonographie einer Anatolisch-Mediterranen Symbolkonstellation," *Anatolica* 6 (1977/1978): 129–57 with XII Plates.

³⁵ See Charlesworth, *The Serpent*, forthcoming.

³⁶ See the comments by A. Byatt in *New Testament Metaphors* (Edinburgh: Pentland Press, 1995), 36.

2.3. *The Gospel of John*

There can be little doubt that the most misunderstood ophidian passage in the New Testament appears in the Gospel of John. Here is the text and translation, with key symbolical words italicized in the English translation:

Καὶ καθὼς Μωϋσῆς ὑψωσεν τὸν ὄφιν ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ,
οὕτως ὑψωθῆναι δεῖ τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου,
ἵνα πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων ἐν αὐτῷ ἔχῃ ζωὴν αἰώνιον.³⁷

And as *Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness*,
so it is *necessary* for the *Son of Man* to be *lifted up*
in order that *all who are believing* in him may
have *eternal life*. [John 3:14–15]³⁸

The possibility that the Fourth Evangelist is drawing some analogy between the serpent and Jesus may be imagined, if Jesus takes on evil or sin to save sinners. Many exegetes, contemplating the milieu of the Gospel of John, would most likely assume that Jesus symbolizing evil is unthinkable. They would thus resist any suggestion that there is any connection between Jesus—the Son of Man—and the serpent. It should now be clear that serpent symbolism was multi-valent when the Gospel of John was being written and shaped.³⁹ Most readers will now comprehend why the Apocalypse of John and its portrayal of the serpent as Satan is not the proper perspective from which to understand John 3—yet this misleading assumption continues to be regnant in commentaries on the Gospel of John.

2.4. *Questions*

For our present focused and succinct explorations into ophidian symbolism in the New Testament, we must limit work to questions that might open up a better perception of the intended meaning of John 3:14.

³⁷ I am influenced by the division of texts provided by M. E. Boismard and A. Lamouille, *Synopsis Graeca Quattuor Evangeliorum* (Leuven and Paris: Peeters, 1986), 29.

³⁸ Translation and italics mine.

³⁹ X. Léon-Dufour has written an insightful study of symbolism in the Gospel of John, but he does not discuss the symbol of the serpent in John 3:14; see his “Spécificité symbolique du langage de Jean,” in *La Communauté Johannique et son Histoire* (ed. J. D. Kaestli et al.; Geneva: Labor et Fides, 1990), 121–34.

Why does the Fourth Evangelist turn to an exegesis of Num 21 to make a point? Why does he attribute the teaching to Jesus? Was he thinking of Moses' serpent as a "pre-Christian" symbol of Jesus? Was he thinking of Moses' serpent as a *typos* of Jesus? If so, what meaning was the author attempting to communicate and why?

Does the Fourth Evangelist in John 3:14–15 only make a comparison between the serpent and Jesus in terms of the verb "to lift up"? That is the usual advice of commentators,⁴⁰ but is it accurate, partially correct, or misleading? Does "to lift up" refer to the lifting up on a cross, and if so why does the Greek verb never have that meaning outside the Gospel of John (and works influenced by it)? Does the verb denote Jesus lifting up into heaven and a return to the Father? What is the meaning of the "as" and "so" that begin the first and second stichoi? Is the passage composed in *parallelismus membrorum*? What is the precise meaning of the passive verb "be lifted up"? Who is the Son of Man and are the Son of Man traditions in the Gospel of John considerably earlier than the edited text we have? What is meant by "believing in him"? Is there any connection between "the serpent" and "eternal life"?

Why have such questions not shaped the commentaries and monographs devoted to the Gospel of John? One explanation is that the serpent is often always misperceived as a symbol of evil. Jews, Christians, and Muslims tell me repeatedly, before we discuss the traditions, that the serpent symbolizes Satan or the Devil. Another reason for the failure to perceive the richness of serpent symbolism in antiquity is because the animal, concept, and symbolism is surprisingly absent in many reference works. For example, there is no entry for "serpent" or "snake" in G. Cornfeld, et al. (eds.), the *Pictorial Biblical Encyclopedia* (1964).

In his *Symbolism in the Fourth Gospel*,⁴¹ C. R. Koester does not discuss the concept of the serpent in the Gospel of John. He does correctly stress the perquisite for understanding the symbolism that shaped this gospel: "Johannine symbolism cannot be treated adequately

⁴⁰ W. Thüsing concluded that "lifting up" referred not to the resurrection of Jesus (cf. Bultmann); it denoted only Jesus' crucifixion. This exegetical error arises by missing the symbolism and focusing myopically only on one theme. See his *Die Erhöhung und Verherrlichung Jesu im Johannesevangelium* (NTab 21; Münster: Aschendorffsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1960; cf. the edition of 1970), 7–8.

⁴¹ C. R. Koester, *Symbolism in the Fourth Gospel* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995).

within the confines of one discipline; it demands consideration of the literary, the socio-historical, and the theological aspects of the text.”⁴² I would add, and the symbolic world of the gospel.

The valuable *Hellenistic Commentary to the New Testament* presents a history of religions parallel to help the exegete understand John 3:14,⁴³ but the reader is told only of the importance of Pseudo-Callisthenes’ *Life and Deeds of Alexander of Macedonia* 2.21:7–11. The sole use of this long citation is to point up the double meaning of some words, especially “to lift up.” The reference is simply in line with that found in the commentaries; no information is provided to help the reader of the New Testament to understand the possible portrayal of Jesus as a serpent.

Yet, if we review the early comments on the Gospel of John we find some surprising and enlightening insights. For example, Calvin correctly perceived that the Fourth Evangelist presented Christ comparing himself “to the serpent.”

Conclusion

Why have New Testament commentators missed the possible ophidian symbolism of John 3:14–15? Why have they avoided the obvious inference of this passage and circumvented the conclusion that Jesus is being compared to a serpent?

The most important reason is the contemporary loss of ancient symbolic language. As Bayley demonstrated, long ago in 1912, in his *The Lost Language of Symbolism*, we have lost touch with the origins of our language and its grounding in nature and the world that sustains us.

More should be suggested on why New Testament experts miss the in-depth meaning of symbols. On the one hand, these scholars have seldom been trained in symbolism; and, unlike many of their Old Testament colleagues, they have not been intimately involved in the archaeology and iconography of the Near East. On the other hand—and indeed more importantly—their biblical exegesis is per-

⁴² Koester, *Symbolism*, xi.

⁴³ *Hellenistic Commentary to the New Testament* (ed. M. E. Boring, K. Berger, and C. Colpe; Nashville: Abingdon, 1995), 260–61.

haps too influenced by hermeneutics and theology, coupled, perhaps, with fears of condemnation from church leaders, dogmatic theologians, and administrators who issue salary checks and control raises and promotions. No New Testament scholar would want to be branded as one who thought of Jesus as a snake.

These brief reflections, in honor of David E. Aune, disclose errors in biblical research and new questions to explore. It is certain that the serpent is not always a pejorative symbol in Christianity; yet A. T. Mann and J. Lyle inform their readers that the snake “is always portrayed in Christian teachings as devilish and evil”?⁴⁴

⁴⁴ A. T. Mann and J. Lyle, *Sacred Sexuality* (Rockport, 1995), 16.

PART FOUR

HELLENISTIC JUDAISM

PHILO, MAGIC AND BALAAM:
NEGLECTED ASPECTS OF PHILO'S EXPOSITION
OF THE BALAAM STORY

Torrey Seland

Magic was a pervading issue in the Greco-Roman world at the time of Philo. Pliny the Elder (23–79 C.E.), for example, has much to tell about magical procedures, rituals and items in his *Naturalis historia* 28–30. Reading Philo's works, we realize that he too was familiar with various practices of magic in his social world of Alexandria. Scholarly studies concerning the phenomenon of magic and magical practices as reflected in the works of Philo are, however, very rare.¹ Furthermore, among the many studies published on magic in ancient Roman Egypt,² very little is to be found on Philo's views and attitudes. The present study will try to remedy some of this lack

¹ In fact, I have been able to find only a few works on magic in the works of Philo, all of R. M. Berchman; cf. Robert M. Berchman, "Arcana Mundi: Magic and Divination in the De Somniis of Philo of Alexandria," in *Mediators of the Divine. Horizons of Prophecy, Divination, Dreams and Theurgy in Mediterranean Antiquity* (ed. Robert M. Berchman; Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1998), 115–54; this is identical to his earlier SBL paper: Robert M. Berchman, "Arcana Mundi: Magic and Divination in the De Somniis of Philo of Alexandria," in *Society of Biblical Literature 1987 Seminar Papers* (ed. Kent Harold Richards; Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1987), 403–28; Robert M. Berchman, "Arcana Mundi: Prophecy and Divination in the Vita Mosis of Philo of Alexandria," in *SBL Seminar Papers Annual Meeting 1988* (ed. David J. Lull; Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1988), 385–423. See also R. M. Berchman, "Arcana Mundi Between Balaam and Hecate: Prophecy, Divination, and Magic in Later Platonism," in *Society of Biblical Literature 1989 Seminar Papers* (ed. D. L. Lull; Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1989), 107–85.

² On magic in ancient Egypt, see e.g., Robert K. Ritner, "Egyptian Magical Practice Under the Roman Empire: The Demotic Spells and Their Religious Context," in *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt. Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung. 2. Principat* (ed. Hildegard Temporini and Wolfgang Haase; vol. 18 Religion; Heidentum: Die religiösen Verhältnisse in den Provinzen Band 5.; Berlin: De Gruyter Verlag, 1995), 3333–79; Georg Luck, *Arcana Mundi. Magic and the Occult in the Greek and Roman Worlds* (Baltimore, Maryland: John Hopkins University Press, 1985); Jan Assmann, "Magic and Theology in Ancient Egypt," in *Envisioning Magic: A Princeton Seminar and Symposium* (ed. Peter Schäfer and Hans G. Kippenberg; Studies in the History of Religions 75; Leiden New York: Brill, 1997), 1–18; David Frankfurter, "Ritual Expertise in Roman Egypt and the Problem of the Category 'Magician,'" in *Envisioning Magic*, 115–35.

of research by focusing on some aspects of magic, and especially on the exposition of the Balaam episode in the works of Philo. In the first section below I give a brief review of some issues discussed in recent studies on ancient magic; then in the following sections I investigate Philo's vocabulary of magic, and his exposition of the Balaam figure.

1. *Magic, Religion and Society*

When dealing with the issue of magic in the works of Philo, as well as in the Hebrew Scriptures—writings upon which Philo often comments—it should be important to elaborate a little on how magic has been understood in its relation to society in general. One can hardly say, however, that there is a general agreement on how to understand ancient magic; but some aspects are less discussed than others. David E. Aune, to whom this study is dedicated, has worked extensively in this field, and we shall have to interact with some of his works below.³

In an article from 1980, D. E. Aune argued for a rather strict *structural-functional* view of magic: magic is defined as “that form of religious deviance whereby individual or social goals are sought by means alternate to those normally sanctioned by the dominant institution.”⁴ The aspect of deviance from what is normally accepted is central here. Hence, “goals sought within the context of religious deviance are magical when attained through the management of supernatural powers in such a way that results are virtually guaranteed.”⁵ Magic and religion become here so intertwined that it is virtually impossible to distinguish between them as socio-cultural categories, and magic becomes a phenomenon that exists within the matrix of religious traditions: “Magic appears to be as universal a feature of religion as deviant behavior is of human societies.”⁶

³ See especially David E. Aune, “Magic in Early Christianity,” in *Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt II. 23,3 Religion* (ed. Hildegard Temporini and Wolfgang Haase; Berlin: Walther de Gruyter, 1980), 1470–557; David E. Aune, *Prophecy in Early Christianity and the Ancient Mediterranean World* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983).

⁴ Aune, “Magic in Early Christianity,” 1515.

⁵ Aune, “Magic in Early Christianity,” 1515.

⁶ Aune, “Magic in Early Christianity,” 1516.

The perspectives of structural-functionalism, however, have not fared well in more recent research, and should—if used—be supplemented with other perspectives. Accordingly, in discussing the relationship between magic, religion and society, several other points of view are important for a proper assessment. Social anthropologists emphasize the embedded nature of religion in cultures of the Greco-Roman world;⁷ the Greeks did not even have a term for ‘religion’. R. K. Ritner has indeed argued that, “Egyptian magic was traditionally neither unorthodox, illegal, nor ‘socially deviant’, but had a commonplace within Egyptian religion.”⁸ Furthermore, one can find that magic is not only present in descriptions by outsiders, but there existed in antiquity individuals who considered themselves magicians: “The category of magic is not merely the expression of an ideological prejudice against ‘the other’; it was also a profession and a practice understood by its practitioners as being something different from the official cult of the gods.”⁹ Hence J. Smith has stated that “the social approach, ironically, cannot seem to handle those cultural instances where ‘magicians’ function as a craft, as a profession, either as an hereditary office or as a guild with procedures for both training and incorporation.”¹⁰ Thus, when dealing with magic in the Greco-Roman world, some scholars have emphasized that the distinction between religion and magic was observed already by those writing in the Greco-Roman epochs as far back as in the works of Plato.¹¹

⁷ Bruce J. Malina, “Religion in the World of Paul,” *BTB* 16 (1986): 92–101.

⁸ See Ritner, “Egyptian Magical Practice,” 3353–58, here quoted from p. 3353. See further Robert K. Ritner, “The Religious, Social, and Legal Parameters of Traditional Egyptian Magic,” in *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power* (ed. Marvin Meyer and Paul Mirecki; Religions in the Graeco-Roman World 129; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995), 43–60.

⁹ Einar Thomassen, “Is Magic a Subclass of Ritual?” in *The World of Ancient Magic* (The First International Samson Eitrem Seminar at the Norwegian Institute at Athens, 4–8 May 1997; ed. David R. Jordan, Hugo Montgomery, and Einar Thomassen; Bergen: The Norwegian Institute at Athens, 1999), 57.

¹⁰ See Jonathan Z. Smith, “Trading Places,” in *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power* (ed. Marvin Meyer and Paul Mirecki, Religions in the Graeco-Roman World 129; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995), 20. He uses this observation, however, to claim that there is “little merit in continuing the use of the substantive term ‘magic’ in second-order, theoretical, academic discourse” (p. 16). It is not quite clear to me, alas, how he then would describe what is generally now labelled ‘magic.’

¹¹ See e.g., Fritz Graf, “Excluding the Charming: The Development of the Greek Concept of Magic,” in *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power* (ed. Marvin Meyer and Paul Mirecki; Religions in the Graeco-Roman World 129; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995), 13–27.

There is thus no consensus on these issues in recent research: "Magic's relation both to religion and science has never been clearly delineated."¹² But the common opinion emerging during the last decades seems to favor the view that magic and religion might be distinguished as social phenomena, but not viewed or studied as quite separate entities.¹³ A. Segal speaks for many when he says that "all definitions of magic are relative to the culture and sub-culture under discussion. Furthermore, it is my contention that we have been misled by our own cultural assumptions into making too strict a distinction between magic and religion in the Hellenistic world."¹⁴ J. Bremmer has pointed out that the birth of the magic-religion opposition is quite recent and can be dated almost exactly to the end of the nineteenth century.¹⁵ Nevertheless, we can hardly do without some kind of distinctions, but our definitions should not be too rigid at the outset. Applied to a study like this of 'magic' in the works of Philo, it should be appropriate to investigate how Philo conceptualizes these issues, and let the various points in view voiced in recent research be tested on his material. In this way, we may arrive at an understanding of what 'magic' represents in his symbolic universe.

Balaam is undoubtedly understood as a diviner in Num 22–24. Hence, I have included the issue of 'divination' in the present study, but with an emphasis on what is to be called '*magical* divination.' Aune defines divination as "the art or science of interpreting symbolic messages from the gods."¹⁶ But if magic is hard to define, so

¹² Alan F. Segal, "Hellenistic Magic: Some Questions of Definition," in *Studies in Gnosticism and Hellenistic Religions* (ed. R. van den Broek and M. J. Vermaseren; Études Préliminaires aux Religions Orientales dans L'Empire Romain; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1981), 349.

¹³ H.-J. Klauck tries to see magic and religion as two contrary poles within a continuum or as the two endpoints of a line. See Hans-Josef Klauck, *Die religiöse Umwelt des Urchristentums I: Stadt- und Hausreligion, Mysterienkulte, Volksglaube* (Studienbücher Theologie 9,1; Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1995), 174–75.

¹⁴ See Segal, "Hellenistic Magic: Some Questions of Definition," 351; cf. on p. 359 where he says that "when magic was viewed as benign it might easily be coterminous with religion, whereas in the crucial contexts where magic was viewed as antagonistic and illegal it was carefully differentiated." See also now J. N. Bremmer, "The Birth of the Term 'Magic,'" *JPz* 126 (1999): 1–12.

¹⁵ See Bremmer, "The Birth of the Term 'Magic,'" 11–12. Cf. p. 12 where he says: "The opposition, then, is a typical product of the Victorian middle-classes with their strong need for positive self-definition against the colonial subjects abroad and the peasants at home. It has no place in a discussion of magic in antiquity." While he may be right in his first assertion, I am not so sure about his last statement. 'Magic' may still have some heuristic value for our studies today.

¹⁶ Aune, *Prophecy in Early Christianity*, 23.

is necessarily magical divination. Following Aune again, we might define *oracular* divination as “messages from the gods in human language, received as statements from a god, usually in response to inquiries.”¹⁷ *Magical* divination, however, is characterized by the search for divine guidance through various means. Among the most common here are lamp divination (*lychnomanteia*); bowl divination (*lekano-manteia*); saucer divination (*phialomanteia*); divination by dreams (*oneiromanteia*); the casting of lots (*kleromancy*); watching the flight and behavior of birds (*ornitomancy*); the condition and behavior of sacrificial animals, or their vital organs before or after sacrifice (*hepatoscopy*, *hieromancy*) or various omens or sounds.¹⁸ Several of these types are mentioned by Philo.

2. Philo and Magic in his Holy Scriptures

Philo was an expositor of the Law of Moses—the Torah—in its Greek version. He may have known some Hebrew, but scholars seem to agree that he did not read the Scriptures in Hebrew, but in Greek. Most of his works are commentaries on topics and/or writings from the Pentateuch.¹⁹ That he was fully aware of different kinds of ‘magic,’ is most evident from the following passage from *Spec.* 3.100–102:

Now the true magic (*ἀληθὴ μαγικήν*), the scientific vision by which the facts of nature are presented in a clearer light, is felt to be a fit object for reverence and ambition and is carefully studied not only by ordinary persons but by kings and the greatest kings, and particularly those of the Persians, so much so that it is said that no one in that country is promoted to the throne unless he has first been admitted into the caste of the Magi (*τοῦ μάγων*). But there is a counterfeit of this, most properly called a perversion of art, pursued by charlatan mendicants (*μηναγύρται*) and parasites and the basest of the women and slave population, who make it their profession to turn men’s love into deadly enmity and their hatred into profound affection. The simplest and most innocent natures are deceived by the bait till at least the worst misfortunes come upon them and thereby the wide membership which

¹⁷ Aune, *Prophecy in Early Christianity*, 23.

¹⁸ Aune, *Prophecy in Early Christianity*, 23–24; 44–47.

¹⁹ See further on these issues Peder Borgen, *Philo of Alexandria, An Exegete for His Time*, NovTSup 86; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1997); Peder Borgen, “Philo of Alexandria as Exegete,” in *A History of Biblical Interpretation Vol 1: The Ancient Period* (ed. Alan J. Hauser and Duane F. Watson; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 114–43.

unites great companies of friends and kinsmen falls gradually into decay and is rapidly and silently destroyed. All these things our lawgiver had in view, I believe, when he prohibited any postponement in bringing poisoners (φαρμακευτῶν) to justice and ordained that the punishment should be exacted at once.

In this section Philo reveals several aspects of his knowledge and views of the magicians and their activities of his time: He knew about the ancient association of the Magi with the Persians. This was common knowledge at least among the literati of his time, and Philo has a similar description in his *Prob.* 74. He also reveals that he is able to distinguish between science and magic; or to use his way of stating it: there was a positive scientific version of magic, and a negative and perverse version. This distinction comes close to what we may call white and black magic. Furthermore, his descriptions seem to be so detailed that they are probably not only derived from his knowledge of the prohibitions of Moses, but also from personal observations. Another important aspect of his statement here is the association of magic with the poor and uneducated. While this might be a derogatory statement of Philo as a member of the (Jewish) elite in Alexandria, we find similar convictions in other sources.²⁰ In addition, as Aune notes, “the Greek of the magical papyri is the unpretentious common language of the people, not the cultivated, literary and atticistic language of the educated.”²¹ Lastly, this passage demonstrates that he obviously knew various sorts of aggressive and malevolent magic: “charms and incantations to turn men’s love into deadly enmity and their hatred into profound love affection” (cf. here also *Spec.* 1.62). Thus, this is an important passage in the works of Philo.

2.1. *Septuagintal and Philonic Vocabulary of Magic*

References to magical practices are found scattered in most of the Hebrew Scriptures, and in a wide range of text types.²² The most

²⁰ Aune, “Magic in Early Christianity,” 1521, points to Origen *Cels.* 6.41;7.4 and Philostratus *Vit. soph.* 523, 590.

²¹ Aune, “Magic in Early Christianity,” 1521.

²² For an overview of the various texts, Baker’s Evangelical Dictionary provides a good review. (I have used the version available on the Internet at www.biblestudy-tools.net/Dictionaries/BakersEvangelicalDictionary). See also the various articles in the *ABD* (*Anchor Bible Dictionary* [ed. D. N. Freedman; 6 vols.; New York: Doubleday, 1992]) on Amulet, Augury, Charmer, Conjuring, Divination, Medium, Necromancy, Soothsayer, Sorcery, Witchcraft, Wizard, and especially Joanne K. Kuermmerlin-

specialized and technical vocabulary, however, appears in the legal material of the Pentateuch. As this is the section of the Scriptures primarily dealt with by Philo, these references are also the most interesting for the present study (cf. Exod 7:11; 22:18; Lev 19:26, 31; 20:6, 27; Deut 18:9–14).²³ Most informative of the variety of terms applied is Deut 18:10–11:

οὐχ εὐρεθήσεται ἐν σοι περικαθαίρων τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἢ τὴν θυγατέρα αὐτοῦ ἐν πυρί, μαντευόμενος μαντείαν, κληδονιζόμενος καὶ οἰωνιζόμενος, φαρμακός, ¹¹ ἐπαείδων ἐπασιδὴν, ἐγγαστρίμυθος καὶ τερατοσκόπος, ἐπερωτῶν τοὺς νεκρούς.

¹⁰ No one shall be found among you who makes a son or daughter pass through fire, or who practices divination, or is a soothsayer, or an augur, or a sorcerer, ¹¹ or one who casts spells, or who consults ghosts or spirits, or who seeks oracles from the dead.

With the addition of one term (Lev 19:26: ὀρνιθοσκοπέω), we have here present all the various terms for ‘magic’ used in the Pentateuch.

The primary Greek terms belonging to the semantic field of magic are the words grouped around μάγος, φαρμακεύς, and γόης. Μάγος and its related terms (μαγεία, μαγικός) are probably the most common terms denoting magicians or magical practices. The φαρμακεύς or φάρμακος group (see φαρμακεία, φάρμακον, φαρμακεύω) denote figures more like our ‘witch,’ ‘sorcerer,’ ‘poisoner’ and their actions, while the γόης group represent terms with a more derogatory value, denoting also sorcerer, but especially with a flavor of ‘swindler,’ ‘cheater,’ and all what they represent. According to the TDNT “the

McLean, “Magic: Old Testament,” in *ABD* 4:468–71. See further also Todd Klutz, ed., *Magic in the Biblical World. From the Rod of Aaron to the Ring of Solomon* (JSNTSup 245; London: T & T Clark International, 2003); Stephen D. Ricks, “The Magician as Outsider in the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament,” in *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power* (ed. Marvin Meyer and Paul Mirecki; Religions in the Graeco-Roman World 129; Leiden New York: E. J. Brill, 1995), 131–43; Peter Schäfer, “Magic and Religion in Ancient Judaism,” in *Envisioning Magic: A Princeton Seminar and Symposium* (ed. Peter Schäfer and Hans G. Kippenberg, Studies in the History of Religions 75; Leiden New York: Brill, 1997), 19–43; Edwin E. Yamauchi, “Magic in the Biblical World,” *TB* 34 (1983): 169–200.

²³ There are also many other references to magic and magicians in the Hebrew Scriptures both in the historical books and in the books of the prophets. We also find a variety of attitudes to magicians and magical practices exhibited in these works. See for instance especially 2 Kgs 9:22–23; 2 Chr 33:6; 1 Sam 28; Isa 8:19; 57:3; Ezek 22:28; Mal 3:5. In some texts there obviously is magical aspects inherent in the ancient Israelite practices described; e.g., clothing (2 Kgs 2:13–149; mandrakes (Gen 30:14–18); instruments (2 Kgs 5:11); hair (Judg 16:17); spells (Josh 10:12); belomancy (1 Sam 20:20–22) and hydromancy (Exod 15:25).

only distinction between μάγος and γόης is that the latter is mostly used for the lower practitioner.”²⁴

We find that the μαγ- terms do not occur in the Septuagintal version of the Pentateuch at all, but eight times in the Book of Daniel (1:20; 2:2, 10, 27; 4:4; 5:7, 11, 15); Philo uses these terms eight times.²⁵ The φαρμακεύς group is found fourteen times in the LXX, including Exod 7:11, 22; 9:11; Deut 18:10; in Philo these terms are much more common, comprising a total of forty-one times. Not all of these are, however, in contexts of magic. Γοής or terms belonging to this stem are not present in the LXX at all. Philo, however, uses γόης six times and γοητεία thirteen times.

When it comes to terms denoting *magical divination*, there is an even richer terminology available, denoting most of the various kinds of divination mentioned above. Ἐπαιδός (‘enchanter’) is one of the terms that are much more frequent in the LXX than in Philo. In Philo, ἐπαιδός is found only once in a section dealing with the sophists (*Migr.* 83). In the LXX, ἐπαιδός is found twenty-one times. Here it is especially used as the primary term describing the magicians of Pharaoh in Egypt, competing with Moses. Among the other terms denoting various forms of magical divination, we find that ἐγγαστριμύθος (belly-speaker, to speak as a medium,) is found fourteen times in the LXX.²⁶ Here it is especially prominent in the descriptions of Saul consulting the ‘witch’ in Endor. It is only found once in Philo; that is in *Somn.* 1,220, where it is one of several terms describing the sorcerers competing with Moses before Pharaoh. Terms belonging to the κληδονίζω group, denoting ‘to give a sign’ or ‘omen,’ is found only a few times in both LXX and in Philo.²⁷ Μαντεύομαι, denoting ‘to prophecy,’ ‘divine,’ ‘give an oracle,’ or ‘to consult an oracle,’ and μάντις (soothsayer, diviner, prophet) are found thirty

²⁴ See TDNT 1:737.

²⁵ See μάγος; *Mos.* 1.92.276; *Spec.* 3.93.100; *Mut.* 106 and 110; μαγικός, *Mos.* 1.277; *Spec.* 3.100. For the most recent Philo index, see Peder Borgen, Kåre Fuglseth, and Roald Skarsten, eds., *The Philo Index: A Complete Greek Word Index to the Writings of Philo of Alexandria* (Grand Rapids/Leiden: Eerdmans/E. J. Brill, 2000).

²⁶ Lev 19:31; 20:6.27; Deut 18:11; see also 1 Sam 28:3,7,8,9; 1 Chr 10:13; 2 Chr 33:6; 35:19; Isa 8:19; 19:3; 44:25. See further on this term; Sofia Torallas Tovar and Anastasia Maravela-Solbakk, “Between Necromancers and Ventriloquists: The ἐγγαστριμύθοι in the Septuaginta,” *Sefarad* 61 (2001): 419–38.

²⁷ In the Pentateuch (LXX), κληδονίζω is found in Deut 18:10.14 (cf. also 2 Kgs 21:6; 2 Chr 33:6 and Isa 2:6). In Philo we find the terms from this group in *Mos.* 1.287; *Spec.* 1.60.63; and *Flacc.* 177.

times in LXX;²⁸ only two of these are in the Pentateuch (Num 22:7; 23:23), both belonging to the Balaam narrative. In Philo these terms are even more frequent (thirty-five times),²⁹ also here as a favorite term describing Balaam. Οἰωνοσκοπός, usually lexicalized as ‘sooth-sayer,’ ‘one who takes omens from the flight and screams of birds’ (ornitomancy), is not present in the LXX; Philo uses it in *Mut.* 202 (Balaam); *Spec.* 1.60; 4.48, cf. the οἰωνοσκοπία in *Mos.* 1.264 (Balaam). The term οἰωνίζω, and its derived terms, having the same meaning of taking omens from birds, are present in LXX in Gen 30:27; 44:5.15; Lev 19:26 and Deut 18:10 (cf. also 1 Kg 20:33; 2 Kg 17:17; 21:6 and 33:6). In Philo we find not οἰωνίζω, but οἰωνόμαντις in *Conf.* 159 and *Somn.* 1.220, and οἰωνός six times, especially in *Mos.* 1.263–287, as a term describing Balaam. The word ὀρνιθοσκοπός, a synonym to οἰωνοσκοπός, present in Lev 19:26, is absent in the works of Philo.

There is thus a variety of terms denoting ‘magic’ and ‘magical divination’ in both the LXX and in the texts of Philo; almost all the terms found in the LXX are also found in Philo, and just a few terms are present in the LXX only and not in Philo, or vice versa. All this demonstrates that Philo was strongly influenced by the vocabulary of the LXX.

2.2. *Philo on Balaam as a Magician*

To Philo, the main story in the LXX dealing with magical divination seems to be the narrative about Balaam (Num 22–24). Balaam is one of the more enigmatic figures in the Hebrew Scriptures, and to a certain degree he remains enigmatic in Philo’s works too. Being a non-Israelite from Petor, he is called upon by Balak, King of Moab, when the Israelites approached on their way to ‘the promised land’ of Canaan. He is called upon to curse the Israelites, but as the story proceeds, Balaam is not able to curse, but to bless. This occurs four times, and at last Balaam returns home. In the Book of Numbers these events are followed by the narrative of Israel’s apostasy at Sittim, and the revenge by God, *inter alia*, through his servant the zealous Phinehas (Num 25). Balaam is here depicted as a positive

²⁸ μαντεία 3x; μαντεύομαι 12x; μαντικός 11x; μάντις 5x.

²⁹ μαντεία 7x; μαντεύομαι 6x; μαντικός 11x; μάντις 11x.

figure; though he is not explicitly called a prophet, he does bring forth messages from God.

The narratives of Num 22–24 are most probably a compilation from several sources exhibiting various emphases.³⁰ The figure of Balaam has, however, been the focus of comments, embellishments and elaborations in several other Jewish writings too.³¹ One of the earliest elaborations on the Balaam figure is present already in the Torah; that is the presentation of a Balaam who not only blesses, but who also advises Balak how to proceed in order to win over the Israelites (Num 31:16; cf. also Rev 2:14; Jude 11). This aspect is much elaborated in the works of Philo; he also pictures him as a magician.

In the Hebrew Bible and in the LXX, Balaam is not explicitly described as a magician. There is, however, a puzzling expression in the LXX Num 22:7: the representatives of Balak came to Balaam with “the μαντεῖα in their hands.” This term μαντεῖα, which is used sixteen times in the LXX, is here often translated as “the rewards of divination” (KJV, ASV, cf. NO 1978/85; NO 1988). Recently it has been argued that it may rather mean “tools of divination”.³² The usage of μαντεῖα here is obscure, but it probably signals that Balaam was considered a diviner, and one who used various divinatory tools and remedies. No other terms, however, usually associated with the semantic field of magic are used of Balaam in the biblical texts.

The presentation of Balaam in the works of Philo is complex. C. T. R. Hayward has argued that Philo portrays Balaam’s oracles as prophecy of the highest order, and Balaam as a remarkable prophet indeed.³³ Hayward argues his view by pointing to the fact that Philo reduces the oracles of Balaam from four to three, which to Philo is

³⁰ Cf. here John T. Greene, “Balaam: Prophet, Diviner and Priest in Selected Ancient Israelite and Hellenistic Jewish Sources,” in *SBL Annual Meeting Seminar Papers 1989* (Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1989), esp. 57–92.

³¹ See on this especially Geza Vermes, “The Story of Balaam—The Scriptural Origin of Haggadah,” in *Scripture and Tradition in Judaism. Haggadic Studies* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1973), 127–77; John T. Greene, “The Balaam Figure and Type Before, During and After the Period of the Pseudepigrapha,” *JSP* 8 (1991): 67–101.

³² R. W. L. Moberly, “On Learning to be a True Prophet: The Story of Balaam and His Ass,” in *New Heaven and New Earth. Prophecy and Millennium. Essays in Honour of Anthony Gelston* (ed. P. J. Harland and C. T. R. Hayward; VTSup 77 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2000), 3–4. Cf. also Vermes, “The Story of Balaam,” 130.

³³ C. T. R. Hayward, “Balaam’s Prophecies as Interpreted by Philo and the Aramaic Targums of the Pentateuch,” in *New Heaven and New Earth*, 19–36.

a figure of completeness.³⁴ Furthermore, he finds that Philo emphasizes the issue of sight in his descriptions of Balaam. Balaam is described as “the one who saw in sleep a clear presentation of God with the unsleeping eyes of the soul” (*Mos.* 1.289). According to Hayward, “Something extraordinary has happened. By so speaking of Balaam, Philo has invested him with the character of Israel, whose name at first was Jacob.”³⁵ Balaam is thus made into a mouthpiece of Jacob-Israel. In doing this, Philo drew upon Jewish traditions later to be codified in the Targums.³⁶ Furthermore, according to Hayward, the issue that Balaam was to be considered a prophet is also emphasized by describing his divinations as *prophecies*: the first oracle is described as uttered by one possessed by the prophetic spirit (προφητικοῦ πνεύματος ἐπιφοιτήσαντος; *Mos.* 1.277); in the second he was ‘prophesying’ (προφητεύων; *Mos.* 1.283), and the third he spoke inspired by God (ἐνθους γενόμενος; *Mos.* 1.288). The LXX does not use such terms when describing Balaam, but both Philo and the Targums do.

However, the complexity of Philo’s view of Balaam come into clearer light when we consider closer the framework of Philo’s exposition of Balaam’s oracles in *De vita Mosi*s, and when further works of Philo are drawn upon.³⁷ Here Balaam is described much more as a magician, that is, as a magical diviner.³⁸

First; in the framework sections of Philo’s work, it is not only said about Balak that “he shrank from a war of destruction waged freely and openly with arms, he had recourse to augury and soothsaying” (*Mos.* 1.263), but Balaam is presented as a just such a diviner, who had learned the secrets of that art (τὰ μαντικῆς) in every form, but was particularly admired for his high proficiency in augury (οἰωνοσκοπίαν; *Mos.* 1.264). Throughout the narrative too, of *De vita Mosi*s 1,263–299—the most lengthy description of Balaam in the works of Philo—Balaam is repeatedly called a μάντις (*Mos.* 1.282,283,285), but also a μάγος (*Mos.* 1.276). He is said to be sent away “to seek good omens through birds and voices (ἐξέπεμπε τὸν μάντιν ἐπ’ οἰωνοὺς

³⁴ Hayward, “On Learning to be a True Prophet,” 20.

³⁵ Hayward, “On Learning to be a True Prophet,” 22.

³⁶ See on this also Vermes, “The Story of Balaam”.

³⁷ Both Vermes and Hayward focus primarily on the exposition of Balaam in Philo’s *De vita Mosi*s. When other works are drawn into the investigation, a fuller picture of how Philo assessed Balaam emerges.

³⁸ Martin Rösel, “Wie einer vom Propheten zum Verführer wurde. Tradition und Rezeption der Balaamgestalt,” *Bib* 80 (1999): 506–24.

καὶ φήμας αἰσίους; *Mos.* 1.282). When he becomes possessed by “the truly prophetic spirit” (*Mos.* 1.277) and utters the oracles from God to Balak, his own art of wizardry (ἔντεχνον μαντικὴν) is banished from his soul: “For the craft of the sorcerer (μαγικὴν σοφιστείαν) and the inspiration of the Holiest might not live together” (*Mos.* 1.277). Hence Balaam is here obviously considered a magician who for the moment is possessed by the truly prophetic spirit and forced to give prophetic utterances (*Migr.* 114). In *Mos.* 1.286, Philo says that Balaam in his heart longed to curse, even if he were prevented from doing this with his voice. Then, after the third oracle, Balaam almost immediately proceeded to utter his own advises to Balak, namely how to seduce the Israelites (*Mos.* 1.294–299); “Hereby he convicted himself of the utmost impiety” (*Mos.* 1.294). Philo here more than hints at the magical and malevolent aspects of Balaam’s divinatory work (cf. *Mos.* 1.263).

Second; these elaborations on the nature of Balaam’s profession are even more present in several of the other texts where Philo mentions Balaam (cf. *Cher.* 32f; *Deus* 181; *Conf.* 159; *Migr.* 113–115; *Mut.* 202–203). In *Deus* 181, Balaam is described as one who followed “omens and false soothsayings” (οἰωνοῖς καὶ ψευδέσι μαντεῖαις; cf. Ezek 22:28), and he did evil things (ἁδικεῖν). As such he is an example of a creature of earth, not of heavenly growth. In *Conf.* 159, Balaam is described as a “dealer in auguries and prodigies and in the vanity of unfounded conjectures” (οἰωνόμαντιν καὶ τερατοσκόπον περιτὰς ἀβεβαίους εἰκασίας ματαιάζοντα), and it is emphasized that there is a natural hostility between conjecture and truth, between vanity and knowledge, and between the divination (μαντεία) which has no true inspiration, and sober wisdom. Philo here does not do away with divination as such as that would disparage the Israelite prophets, but he disapproves of the means of Balaam’s divination. In *Migr.* 113, Balaam is said to have been “adjudged impious and accursed even by the wise lawgiver” (i.e., Moses), because he became the ‘mantis’ of evil things. This evidently draws upon the fact that Balaam is identified as one who in fact did not want to bless but to curse Israel, and who at last gave Balak evil advises (*Migr.* 114; *Mut.* 200). In *Mut.* 202–203, Balaam is called οἰωνοσκόπος, and because of his divination he “defaced the stamp of heaven-sent prophecy” (διότι σοφιστεία μαντικὴ τὴν θεοφόρητον προφητείαν παρεχάραξε).

This brief review demonstrate that Philo's picture of Balaam is highly complex, and the exposition of Hayward too one-sided. On the one hand Philo has to cope with the biblical and related traditions about the great prophecies of Balaam. On the other hand, he cannot escape the other traditions emphasizing the magical aspects of Balaam's activities. Philo solves this dilemma by retelling the prophetic oracles while emphasizing Balaam as so possessed by the prophetic spirit of God, that he could do nothing but obey this inspiration (*Migr.* 114). But when released from this prophetic possession, Balaam is and remains to Philo a magical diviner. It is telling that some of the descriptive terms he uses as characterizations of Balaam are used almost exclusively in these texts, and in other texts indisputably dealing with magicians. Furthermore, several of the terms applied to Balaam belong to Deut 18:10–11 which describe magical actions forbidden in Israel. Hence Balaam is not only to be considered a diviner, but as a magical diviner of the kind prohibited in Israel (Num 23:23, cf. *Mos.* 1.284).

Conclusions

Given Philo's high view of prophecy, it comes to no surprise to discover his great focus on the issue of magical divination. On the one hand, genuine prophecy is to Philo due to "the divine spirit which plays upon the vocal organism and dictates words, which clearly express its prophetic message"; no pronouncement of a prophet is ever his own, "he is an interpreter prompted by another in all his utterances" (*Spec.* 4.49; cf. 1.65). On the other hand, magical divination is mere fantasies of human beings; it is "guessing", "surmises and conjectures" (*Spec.* 1.61; 4.50).

The social life of Alexandria probably surfaces when Philo cautions and says: "Moses demands that one who is registered in the commonwealth of the laws (κατὰ τοὺς νόμους πολιτεία) should be perfect not in the lore, in which many are schooled, of divination and voices and plausible conjectures, but in his duties towards God..." (*Spec.* 1.63; cf. 1.319). He seems to have been well acquainted with various forms of magical divination, as both divinations by dreams (oneiromanteia), watching the flight and behavior of birds (ornitomancy),

watching sacrificial animals, and various other omens are mentioned by him.³⁹ I have argued elsewhere⁴⁰ that his exposition of Deut 13 in *Spec.* 1.315–318 should be read as an actualization of this very law, possibly triggered by local experiences in Alexandria. Apostasy was an option, and ‘seduction’ one of the means. Hence magical divination was no ‘*adiaphoron*’ to Philo; on the contrary, it could lead to impiety (ἀσεβεία). I suggest that his struggles with the figure of Balaam, resulting in his emphasizing of his magic only vaguely presented in the Pentateuch, should also be understood as part of Philo’s struggle against magical divination of his own times.

When reading the works of Philo, there should be no doubt that he considered magic as incompatible with ‘true religion,’ i.e. his Judaism: it paved the way for impiety (ἀσεβεία; *Spec.* 1.61). Whether he considered it an inherent part of the other ‘religions’ of his Alexandrian social world is probable, but hard to say as he provides no direct statements in this regard. To him, magical divination is a transgression of both the first and the ninth commandment of the Decalogue (*Spec.* 1.59–63; 4.48), and as such a “corruption of art, a counterfeit of the divine and prophetic possession” (*Spec.* 4.48). Hence when it comes to his own form of religion, magic is forbidden in the Torah; i.e., in the constitution of his Judaism. To those wanting to be Torah-observing Jews, magic should be no option. Accordingly, his expositions can be read as demonstrating that magic was not only a feature of the opponents of Moses in Egypt and of the non-Jewish Balaam, but also of the non-Jewish surroundings of the Jews in Alexandria. Whether it in reality also was a part of the daily life in the *Jewish* sectors of the Alexandria of his time, is quite another question. But in light of our other sources of magical activities in Jewish circles, and Philo’s stern warnings against magic in so many of his writings, we might suggest that it was a feature more known to his readers than he ever liked.

³⁹ Cf. *Spec.* 1.62: “... such as birds and wings and their flight hither and thither through the air, and grovelling reptiles which crawl out of their holes to seek their food; and again entrails and blood and corpses which deprived of life at once collapse and decompose...” Cf. also the section above on the vocabulary of LXX and Philo.

⁴⁰ Torrey Seland, *Establishment Violence in Philo & Luke: A Study of Non-Conformity to the Torah & Jewish Vigilante Reactions* (Biblical Interpretation Series 15; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995), 136–60.

PART FIVE

EARLY CHRISTIAN LITERATURE

RHETORICAL HANDBOOKS IN SERVICE OF BIBLICAL EXEGESIS: EUSTATHIUS OF ANTIOCH TAKES ORIGEN BACK TO SCHOOL

Margaret M. Mitchell

David E. Aune's masterful handbook, *The Westminster Dictionary of New Testament and Early Christian Literature and Rhetoric*,¹ will undoubtedly serve as a training and reference manual for New Testament interpreters for the next generations. It is the work of a dedicated, careful teacher, who offers his readers the fruit of his considered judgment on the literary structure, rhetorical techniques, and composition of each literary work in the New Testament, Apostolic Fathers, and much of the Apocryphal New Testament, as well as on essential points of literary contact between early Christian texts and their literary progenitors, in both Jewish and Greco-Roman literary culture. As the title indicates, this dictionary both implicitly and explicitly insists that the education of an exegete in our time must include serious learning in the ancient *artes rhetoricae*. Such an approach to the reading of the earliest Christian texts is normally traced, in modern scholarship, to flagship works like Hans Dieter Betz's *Galatians* commentary of 1979.² It seems quite accurate to say that in the last 25 years a sea change has taken place with the result that most New Testament scholars would accept that the earliest literate Christians in some way used 'rhetorical arts' in communicating their gospel,³ and that writings like the letters of Paul, which virtually everyone agrees contain argumentation, can be illuminated by studying them

¹ David E. Aune, *The Westminster Dictionary of New Testament and Early Christian Literature and Rhetoric* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2004).

² Hans Dieter Betz, *Galatians* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979). Aune wrote an insightful review of Betz's commentary, which appeared in *Religious Studies Review* 7 (1981): 323–28; cf. idem, *The New Testament in its Literary Environment* (LEC 8; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1987), 206–208.

³ The bibliography is by now out of control, and there is no unanimity about what goes under the umbrella of 'rhetorical criticism.' For a start, see Duane F. Watson and Alan J. Hauser, *Rhetorical Criticism of the Bible: A Comprehensive Bibliography with Notes on History and Method* (Biblical Interpretation 4; Leiden: Brill, 1994), and now Aune, *Westminster Dictionary*, 483–595.

in the light of the conventions taught in ancient *paideia* and schooled via public performance for the construction of persuasive speech. In my judgment this is best done when we meet *paideia* with *paideia* (ours with theirs), rather than taking their *technē* out of its setting in *paideia* to use in some cookie cutter way to dissect New Testament documents. Conceived in these terms, ‘rhetorical criticism’ should be viewed as less a method to be applied than a sensibility to be cultivated.

1. *The Use and Abuse of Handbooks*

The ancient rhetorical handbooks (the τέχναι/*technae*), such as those composed by Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian, have an important part to play in that task, but the actual mode of their employment in New Testament exegesis is not without problems. Aune wisely noted in the entry on them in his *Westminster Dictionary*: “The important role of classical rhetorical handbooks in NT scholarship means that the proper purpose and function of these handbooks needs careful evaluation” (p. 420).⁴ In that article, under the subhead ‘*The use and abuse of handbooks*’ (p. 421), Aune treated six somewhat incommensurate concerns that have been raised about ‘abuse’ of handbooks in New Testament scholarship. The first three focus on the misperceptions and inaccuracies that result from an over reliance on modern syntheses of ancient rhetorical handbooks, such as Lausberg or Martin (and, presumably, Aune’s own!), which can give an impression of uniformity and equality of influence among sources that diverge in time (from the 4th century B.C.E. through late antiquity) and circulation.⁵ This does not mean one should simply leave the ancient τέχναι aside, however, but that in drawing them into the exegetical enterprise we cannot presume either that the extant handbooks completely encompass ancient rhetorical norms, or that, in themselves, they speak directly to any particular rhetorical statement or situation. Aune’s counsel—surely right—implies that students and

⁴ This entry is an overview of the handbooks; there are also valuable separate entries on each of the main handbooks.

⁵ Heinrich Lausberg, *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric: A Foundation for Literary Study* (ed. and trans. D. E. Orton and R. D. Anderson; Leiden: Brill, 1998); Josef Martin, *Antike Rhetoric* (Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft 2/3; Munich: Beck, 1974).

scholars should read these works themselves and enter not only into the problems involved with considering the similarities and differences in each but also the larger question of how representative any particular piece of rhetorical theory may be of rhetorical education in general.

The second triad of issues Aune takes up includes criticisms raised by some scholars who register a wholesale resistance *in principle* to the use of rhetorical handbooks in New Testament exegesis.⁶ The first of these criticisms is the claim that ancient readers in general (non-Christian and Christian) did not use the rhetorical τέχναι as tools for literary analysis, a position that Aune decisively refutes in a few lines. The second is the insistence that, because letter writing is not treated in ancient rhetorical handbooks (despite *de elocutione* 4.223–235!), “epistolary rhetoric was never part of the classical rhetorical handbook tradition” (421). Aune merely records this critique, but the *inclusio* in his own article, which begins with the cautionary note that “it must be emphasized that a great deal of ancient ‘rhetoric’ was never included in the handbooks” (p. 420, using the diatribe as example), would suggest that he regards this appeal to silence as hardly insurmountable.⁷ The last item (Aune’s #6) expresses a caution about using Latin handbooks such as that of Quintilian to interpret Greek texts composed in the east. While I am myself less sure about this as a blanket rule,⁸ if the point of this caution is to emphasize that Paul did not read Quintilian (as indeed chronology alone dictates!), and hence that the exegetical enterprise of any New Testament

⁶ Philip H. Kern, *Rhetoric and Galatians: Assessing an Approach to Paul’s Epistle* (SNTSMS 101; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Stanley E. Porter, “Paul of Tarsus and His Letters,” in idem, ed., *Handbook of Classical Rhetoric in the Hellenistic Period, 330 B.C.–A.D. 400* (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 533–85; Carl Joachim Classen, *Rhetorical Criticism of the New Testament* (WUNT 128; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000).

⁷ I do not think so, either, for the simple reason that we have letters either by or in the name of great orators like Isocrates and Demosthenes, and it is hardly conceivable that literary figures, of high or low status, could simply turn on and off their literary education as though it were some kind of generically segregated entity. Again, the problem is a mechanistic conception of a literary culture rather than an appreciation for a literary-rhetorical sensibility, which was ingrained in literate persons in the Greco-Roman world.

⁸ My reasons include the remarkable stability of Hellenistic rhetoric through into the Byzantine period, the well-known and easily documented dependence of the Latin rhetorical handbooks on Greek exemplars, and the extent to which a figure like Cicero himself traveled to the east and hence was not an isolated figure on the Italian peninsula—as this geographically framed critique would seem to assume.

text should not proceed as though it were reconstructing a one-to-one dependence between any one author and any one handbook, I would heartily agree. But that is no reason to eschew completely the usefulness of *our reading* Latin rhetorical handbooks toward the end of educating ourselves about ancient education and oratory generally. The antidote for mechanistic appropriation of handbook evidence (a problem noted by the ancients as well, of course)⁹ is not to read less, but to read more. All New Testament exegetes should immerse themselves in both Latin and Greek handbooks, as well as both the *progymnasmata*,¹⁰ those school exercises which served as the intervening term between the more abstract τέχναι and actual rhetorical practice, by which we can attempt to imbibe at least somewhat the general enculturation of literate, educated persons, and, abundantly, in actual ancient rhetorical literature (speeches, letters, historiography), especially the classical texts that were part of the standard curriculum (Homer, speeches of Demosthenes, etc.) and the extant works of such near-contemporary popular orators as Dio Chrysostom and Aelius Aristides.¹¹ To this should also be added the full complement of patristic literature which forms a continuum with the New Testament, and should not be artificially severed from it in historical and literary study of early Christian literature.¹²

2. *Rhetoric and Early Christian Exegetes*

It is in regard to that last corpus of literature that a seventh counter-argument can be added to Aune's list of those offered by some dissenters: the sweeping assertion that the earliest Christian exegetes—especially those who we know were trained in rhetoric, like Origen, Chrysostom, and Augustine—neither employed rhetoric in their own ecclesiastical compositions, nor recognized the use of rhetorical tech-

⁹ E.g., Aristotle, *Rhet.* 1.1.9.

¹⁰ On which see the article in Aune, *Westminster Dictionary*, 375–78.

¹¹ I argued against 'exclusive reliance on the handbooks' almost 15 years ago (*Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation: An Exegetical Investigation of the Language and Composition of 1 Corinthians* [HUT 28; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1991; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1993], 8–11).

¹² Aune's *Westminster Dictionary* includes the New Testament and Early Christian Literature only up to ca. 200 (i.e., he has an entry on Irenaeus, but not one on Tertullian, or Origen).

niques in such biblical authors as Paul.¹³ While such claims are easily falsifiable, in particular the former—since the early Christian authors' rhetorical training, its effect on their oratory, and its being in fact the very fundament of their biblical interpretation are all abundantly documented¹⁴—here I wish to highlight the untenable assumption that underlies them, i.e., that the proper measure of a rhetorical education is overt documentation of direct dependence upon one or more of its textbooks (the handbooks), as isolated from all other influences in a literary culture.¹⁵ This would seem to require an author to stop in the midst of an argument or homily to give credit to their γραμματικός or secondary school textbook [τέχνη] for a rhetorical technique or tactic they were about to use as the only unambiguous evidence of the impact of rhetorical training on any particular author. In another context I have argued against this unrealistic formulation of the burden of proof offered by those who would dispute the contention that 'the proof is in the pudding' of skilled rhetorical products themselves (to say nothing of the historical verification we have in many cases of rhetorical training).¹⁶ Yet despite the doubt that should attend such an expectation for this kind of inartistic and amateurish broadcasting of one's basic rhetorical training, the purpose of the present essay¹⁷ is to present for discussion

¹³ For the former claim, see Kern, *Rhetoric and Galatians*, 169–98; for the latter, in addition to Kern, see R. Dean Anderson, Jr., *Ancient Rhetorical Theory and Paul* (Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology 18; Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1996), 124 n. 331.

¹⁴ See Robert M. Grant, *The Letter and the Spirit* (London: S.P.C.K., 1957); Christoph Schäublin, *Untersuchungen zu Methode und Herkunft der antiochenischen Exegese* (Theophania 23; Cologne and Bonn: Peter Hanstein, 1974); Bernhard Neuschäfer, *Origenes als Philologe* (Schweizerische Beiträge zur Altertumswissenschaft 18/1–2; Basel: Reinhardt, 1987); Frances M. Young, "The Rhetorical Schools and Their Influence on Patristic Exegesis," in *The Making of Orthodoxy: Essays in Honour of Henry Chadwick* (ed. Rowan Williams; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 182–99. For both substantive and methodological counter-arguments, see Margaret M. Mitchell, "Reading Rhetoric with Patristic Exegetes: John Chrysostom on Galatians," in *Antiquity and Humanity: Essays on Ancient Religion and Philosophy Presented to Hans Dieter Betz on His 70th Birthday* (ed. Adela Yarbro Collins and Margaret M. Mitchell; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 333–355.

¹⁵ This in particular is a difficulty of Anderson's study, which, for all its industry, treats the τέχναι as separable from other ways in which authors (and readers) were at home in their own literary culture (*Ancient Rhetorical Theory and Paul*).

¹⁶ See Mitchell, "Reading Rhetoric With Patristic Exegetes."

¹⁷ This thesis statement should be credited to Mrs. Miller, my fifth grade teacher at Old Greenwich Elementary School sometime during the school year 1966–67. I do not remember if there was a textbook used in that class or, if so, its name.

and analysis just such a case—where an early Christian exegete actually cites a rhetorical handbook to support his own exegesis of a biblical text, and rebukes his opponent for breaking the rules of elementary literary education.

3. *An Exegetical ἄγών: Eustathius and Origen Face Off on 1 Samuel 28*

The subject of our inquiry is a remarkable exegetical contretemps between Eustathius of Antioch and Origen of Alexandria (the latter participating posthumously) on 1 Samuel/1 Kingdoms 28. Already when Origen delivered his homily on this passage the biblical narrative about Saul and the woman at Endor was notorious (he terms it an ἡ ἱστορία ἡ διαβόητος [1.2 [44]).¹⁸ Crucial to the exegetical debate we shall trace here is the decision that had been made by the Septuagint translators to render the Hebrew phrase for the woman, *’sht b’lat ’wv* (‘a woman with mastery over the divination pits’) with the Greek word ἐγγαστρίμυθος, ‘belly-myther,’ a term used, e.g., by Plutarch to refer to the Eurykleas or Pythones.¹⁹ According to the Septuagintal narrative, Saul, after driving the ἐγγαστρίμυθοι out of his kingdom, when progressively disturbed at the silence that met

Honesty compels me also to admit that I have read probably 5000–10,000 such thesis statements since then, and have probably written estimably 300 or more of my own (as well as having cajoled two decades of students to produce them), and orally chipped in another 500 or more (all figures are approximate). Therefore I cannot discount the influence of all these others also on the present formulation in this sentence in the present essay. I would regard every one of my 300 written thesis statements as a ‘conscious’ or deliberate appropriation of my literary training, but, with apologies to Mrs. Miller (and many teachers since whose name I have not retained in memory), must admit that I did not think of her as I penned each one. The formulation of the statement itself would I think have been unaffected either way.

¹⁸ The texts of Origen and Eustathius will be cited from the Greek text edited by Manlio Simonetti, *Origene Eustazio, Gregorio di Nissa, La Maga di Endor* (Biblioteca patristica; Florence: Nardini, 1989), employing its paragraph and line enumeration. The translations given here are from a volume forthcoming in the Writings From the Greco-Roman World series (series editor John Fitzgerald) by Rowan A. Greer and myself (the Simonetti text will appear there, as well). Readers will also wish to consult the critical editions of the Greek text of Origen edited by Pierre and Marie-Thérèse Nautin, *Origène: homélies sur Samuel* (Sources chrétiennes 328; Paris: Cerf, 1986), and of Eustathius edited by José H. Declerck, *de engagstrimytho, contra Origenem* (Corpus Christianorum: Series graeca 51; Turnhout: Brepols; Louvain: University Press, 2002).

¹⁹ “For it is entirely simple-minded and childlike to suppose that the God himself, just like the *engagstrimythoi* (called of old Eurykleis, but now Pythones [ἐγγαστρίμυθοι

his more mainstream attempts at divine counsel, sought out a woman who would perform necromancy for him. He went to her in disguise, asked her to raise up Samuel, and then, though he did not see Samuel himself, Saul interpreted her own verbal description of what she saw as assuredly being Samuel himself back from the dead. The peeved prophet and unhappy king engage in conversation, and the ‘Samuel’ who speaks prophecies (as he had when alive in 1 Samuel 15) that God has taken the kingdom out of Saul’s hands and given it to David, and that Saul and his sons will die the next day. In the next battle Saul does meet his demise.

Eustathius of Antioch was an ecclesiastical leader about whom we know far too little, but he was in attendance at the Council of Nicea in 325, and probably lived until ca. 337. According to the later church historian Sozomen, he was famous for his εὐλῳττία, praised for his antiquity of expression, moderation in thought, beauty in expression, and grace of reporting-style.²⁰ The only complete extant text we have from his pen is a treatise known by the traditional title, *de engastrimytho contra Origenem*. In this document, addressed to a certain Eutropius, Eustathius engages in what he calls an ἀγὼν δικανικός, a ‘forensic trial,’ over the proper interpretation of this difficult text of events at Endor. Eustathius in his *prooimion* says this Eutropius has sought his opinion because he was not pleased with the things Origen published about the ‘belly-myther.’ In a homily delivered in Jerusalem ca. 238–242, which was apparently in wide circulation thereafter,²¹

Εὐρυκλέας πάλαι νυνὶ δὲ Πύθωνα προσαγορευομένους]) by entering into the bodies of the prophets, speaks, using their mouths and voices as his instruments” (*De defectu oraculorum* 414E). See also I. Trencsényi-Waldapfel, “Die Hexe von Endor und die Griechisch-römische Welt,” *Acta orientalia academiae scientiarum Hungaricae* 11 (1960): 201–222, who rightly appreciated the resonances of the LXX translation with Greek (and Roman) religion.

²⁰ ὥς ἐκ τῶν φερομένων αὐτοῦ λόγων συνιδεῖν ἔστιν ἀρχαιότητι φράσεως καὶ σωφροσύνη νοημάτων καὶ ὀνομάτων κάλλει καὶ χάριτι ἀπαγγελίας εὐδοκιοῦντων (*h.e.* 2.19: “as it is possible to see from his published writings, distinguished as they are by antiquity of expression, moderation in thought, beauty in expression and grace of reporting style”) Compare the list of stylistic virtues catalogued by Ps-Demetrius, Hermogenes and other rhetoricians given in Aune, “Style, or stylistics” (*Westminster Dictionary* 451–52).

²¹ If later sources are an indication, we have papyrus from the sixth to seventh century Tura that contains extracts of this work alongside other prominent works (books I and II of the *contra Celsum* and portions of Origen’s commentary on Romans) (see Nautin and Nautin, *Homélies sur Samuel* [Sources chrétiennes 328] 13–15, with further bibliography), and for the earlier period we have the testimony of Eustathius himself, who in a gesture of fair-play says he will append a copy of Origen’s homily to his own treatise (1.4 [94–96]).

Origen had argued that ‘truly it was Samuel who was raised,’ an interpretation Eustathius regards as crude and dangerously wrong, for no *daimonion* (such as he assumes was at work in the woman) could raise the soul of a just man like Samuel. Historically this remarkable dispute has been viewed with some surprise, since it is Origen the famous Alexandrine who appears to take a literal reading of the passage, and the Antiochene, Eustathius, who upbraids him for it.

4. *The ‘Urbanity Topos’*

But what appear to be opposing exegetical conclusions about 1 Samuel 28 must not blind us to the enormous amount of shared ground between our two exegetes. This is a debate among cultivated men who share the same world, the same educational background. Late antiquity, like London in ‘My Fair Lady’ is a place where “An Englishman’s way of speaking absolutely classifies him; the moment he talks he makes some other Englishman despise him.”²² Those who share the *παιδεία* of literate Greek-speaking elites know one another, and whence they have come. Given these common roots, how can divergence in any particular case be explained? I suggest we attend carefully to the key role of what I call ‘the urbanity *topos*,’ a jibe which one interpreter makes against another, by which he suggests that the other is an *illiteratus*, one who is not properly schooled in textual interpretation. This shows the ‘school mentality’ of all early Christian exegesis, a factor which has played a major role in the more recent erosion of the conventional scholarly divide between Alexandrine and Antiochene interpreters, because it shows that exegetes from both provenances in the 3rd and 4th century were members of the ‘Ivy educated’ of their day, who could chide one another with having forgotten the basic lessons of their school days. In order to understand the rhetorical force of this move, we must appreciate that to ‘take someone back to school’ is a disparaging enterprise by which one compares their interpretations with the standard textbooks that they should have cut their teeth on but, apparently, did not, as evidenced by their faulty interpretation in a given

²² Earlier in same song: “This verbal class distinction by now should be antique” (lyrics by Alan Jay Lerner, music by Frederick Loewe).

case. The textbooks they bring, as this presentation will show, are the rhetorical handbooks, with their instructions about literary forms and meanings, and the ‘classics’ they all had to learn in school, such as Homer, Hesiod, and Plato.

5. *Origen, the Literal Sense, and ‘Elevated Meaning’*

Origen embarked on his homily on 1 Kingdoms 28 by presenting the interpretive issue in disarmingly simple terms. Passages that are ‘necessary for our hope,’ he says, must be true, word for word (κατὰ τὸν λόγον, 2.1–4 [46]). Because the heart of the 1 Samuel 28 narrative is the ‘elevation’ (ἀναγωγή/ἀναχθῆναι) of Samuel, the text, for Origen, must narrate actual, literal events, since it testifies to the supreme ‘elevated sense’ (ἀναγωγή) of scripture: that God will raise the souls of the just from death and allow entrance into paradise.²³ Couched in terms of forensic analysis of a textual witness,²⁴ Origen named the stakes as all or nothing: “Do these words stand as written? Are they true or are they not true?” (2.5 [48]). Yet Origen conceded that he knew of fellow Christians who have, in his terms, ‘faced off against the scripture’ (ἀντιβλέψαντες) (3.1 [48]). These purveyors of what he will call an ἐναντίος λόγος, ‘opposing interpretation’ (4.6 [52]) say bluntly:

I do not believe the belly-myther. The belly-myther says she has seen Samuel. She is lying. Samuel was not brought up. Samuel does not speak (3.1 [48]).

But Origen finds this charge against the woman for having committed perjury textually unconvincing, and, above all, pastorally threatening, for it may lead to ἀπιστία about the veracity of scripture in its entirety (2.5 [48]). He offers his own reading—which takes the

²³ In 2.1 [46] Origen justifies why he starts here with the ἱστορία before getting to the ἀναγωγή (a position he repeats at 5.1 [54]). The entire discourse leads to the special insight about τί ἡμᾶς ἔχει μετὰ τὴν ἔξοδον (“what our condition will be after we depart from this life”), or οἱ λόγοι μέγαλοι καὶ ἀπόρρητοι οἱ περὶ τῆς ἐξόδου (“words that are holy, great, and ineffable, words concerning our departure from this world”), which is especially fulfilled in 9.7–10.5, where the περισσόν τι (‘something extra’) believers have over Samuel and his generation is revealed.

²⁴ For a full discussion, see Margaret M. Mitchell, “Patristic Rhetoric on Allegory: Origen and Eustathius Put 1 Samuel 28 on Trial,” *The Journal of Religion* 85 (2005): 414–445.

events as having happened exactly as narrated—as superior to that of his opponents, an interpretation, indeed, that all people who are more widely read would recognize as correct:

Whose persona (πρόσωπον) is it that says, ‘the woman said’? Is it, then, the persona of the Holy Spirit, by whom scripture is believed to have been written, or is it the persona of someone else? For, *as those who are familiar with all sorts of writings know* (ὡς ἴσασιν καὶ οἱ περὶ παντοδαποὺς γενόμενοι λόγους), the narrative persona (τὸ γὰρ διηγηματικὸν πρόσωπον) throughout is the persona of the author (πρόσωπον τοῦ συγγραφέως). And the author of these words is believed to be not a human being, but the author is the Holy Spirit who moves the human beings [to write] (4.2 [50–52]).

Invoking the urbanity topos, Origen steadfastly maintains that true *literati* would know how to read a text such as this, for, in an ironic appeal to the literary-critical method of λύσις ἐκ προώπου (‘solution by speaker’),²⁵ he argues that the whole text is the voice of its author, the Holy Spirit, which is incapable of falsehood. By this logic, all words in the text (regardless of the individuality of speaking voice which that principle was actually designed to elucidate) constituted an unimpeachably true utterance inspired by the divine author. Hence if the text says “Saul knew it was Samuel” (1 Kingdoms 28:14) then the event as narrated (κατὰ τὸν λόγον) must indeed have taken place. In the rest of his homily, Origen shows that even the apparent problems this interpretation causes (τὸ δὲ εἶναι ἀληθὴ ζήτησιν καὶ ἐπαπόρησιν ἡμῖν παρέχει [2.5 (48)]) can be resolved when one understands that Samuel and all the saints were in Hades proclaiming the future arrival of Christ, who would provide the way for believers to proceed toward the tree of life in paradise that was blockaded at their time (9.36–64 [204–206]). In this way the ‘literal’ sense of this individual pericope is entirely wrapped up in the ultimate ἀναγωγή (‘elevated sense’), which points to the eschatological ‘advantage’ Christians

²⁵ See Neuschäfer, *Origenes als Philologe*, 1.263–76 and notes in 2.475–81. Origen’s use here is ironic, because most often the criterion works in the other direction, usually being employed to absolve the author of self-contradiction by reference to the various personae in the text, each of which speaks in a manner appropriate to that character, and hence distinguishable from the authorial point of view. Surely Origen, who used this principle elsewhere as, for instance, in his exegesis of Romans 7 and the Psalm speakers (David, Christ, etc.), knew the difference between ἀπλὴ διήγησις, ‘simple narration,’ and διήγησις μιμήσεως, ‘narration by imitation’ (as found, e.g., in Plato, *Resp.* 3.6). But here he wishes to insist on the universally true and univocal voice of the inspired author, the Holy Spirit.

now hold (10.1–25 [206–208]). In its fullest form Origen’s argument appeals to the superior literary sensibilities of those who are more experienced in reading, and those (presumably the same group, in this context, at least)²⁶ who have been the beneficiaries of divine inspiration, as well (see especially 10.1–3 [206]).²⁷ With this jab about those who know correctly how to interpret, Origen claims that all those who have a proper education would be able to read this text with *true* understanding; in this way he implicitly tars his opponents as poorly educated and lacking such literary finesse.²⁸

6. *Eustathius Takes Origen Back to School*

Almost 100 years later Eustathius will take up the challenge offered by Origen—and the same slur he had used—to turn the tables and to paint his predecessor as not having learned *his* basic lessons in school, which should have taught him tools by which to deconstruct the testimony of the ἐγγαστρίμυθος, and thereby reach the only possible conclusion: the woman never really raised Samuel from the dead. At the outset of the treatise Eustathius says he wishes to be completely fair in his presentation of Origen’s views and in his refutation of them, lest readers think he has undertaken this ἀγὼν δικανικός (‘forensic suit’) on his own behalf, rather than for the sake of others who have been enticed by Origen’s reputation into a fundamental theological and pastoral error. He offers to set up a ‘horse race’ or ‘wrestling match’ between the competing interpretations of the passage (his and Origen’s) so that via the σύγκρισις (‘rhetorical comparison’) his audience—whom he flatters as φιλολόγοι (‘literature-lovers’ or ‘scholars’)—will readily recognize which of the two is proffering the correct interpretation.²⁹

²⁶ The various types of readers and readings envisioned and allowed by Origen theoretically and actually is of course an enormous issue (compare, e.g., *Peri Archon* 4.1–4).

²⁷ ἀλλὰ πάντα θαυμασίως γέγραπται καὶ νενόηται οἷς ἂν ὁ θεὸς ἀποκαλύψῃ (10.1 [74]: “Rather, everything is written in a marvelous fashion, and its meaning has been understood by those to whom God has revealed it”).

²⁸ The literary bumpkin quality he wishes to press on his opponents stands in direct (and deliberate) contrast to Origen’s parodying of his ‘bombastic’ rhetorical style (ὁ καταβομβήσας [4.1 (50)]).

²⁹ “For it is possible to carry out the investigation by a side-by-side comparison of how both sides stand in their opinions, and for scholars to choose the better

After a run-through of τὸ τῆς ἱστορίας γράμμα ('the literal sense of the narrative'),³⁰ by which he means the plain sense of the text that any right-minded reader should be able to see, Eustathius replicates Origen's opening strategy of personification of the exegetical opponent. In this case Eustathius (without apparent self-irony) brings Origen back from the dead to testify against the veracity of the necromantic act of the woman at Endor that while alive he had defended as real.³¹ Posing his interlocutor a series of questions which show how he has become τῆς ἀληθείας ἐσφόλη, 'tripped up over the truth,' Eustathius quotes Origen's claim that the very 'narrative voice of scripture' (ἡ διηγηματικὴ τοῦ συγγραφέως φωνή) ensured the veracity of the account. Then, with the verbal equivalent of a wag of the head, he says:

Indeed, *those who have spent more time becoming conversant with a wide range of literature know better* [κάλλιον γοῦν ἴσασιν οἱ παντοίοις σχολαιότερον ὁμιλήσαντες λόγοις] how the narrative discourse of the author has set out these things which the belly-myther appeared to do or say to the one seeking divination, Saul. Of course, the author, because he was telling a story about her and putting down her words in a style appropriate to her [ὁ συγγραφεὺς καὶ τοὺς λόγους αὐτῆς ἐπὶ λέξεως ἐκτιθέμενος], said, "And the woman said, 'whom shall I bring up for you?'" Who is so simple-minded as to pretend not to understand [τίς δὲ οὕτως εὐήθης ἐστὶν ὥς ὑποκρίνεσθαι μὴ νοεῖν] that these are not the statements of the author [ὅτι αὐταὶ μὲν τοῦ συγγραφέως οὐκ εἰσιν αἰφωναί], but of the woman who was acting under demonic influence? Even her name brought this to the forefront [ἥς καὶ τοῦνομα προὔταξεν]. Nowhere does the author confirm her words as true, nor would anyone be able to show this in any way at all [οὐδαμοῦ μέντοι βεβαιοὶ τοὺς λόγους αὐτῆς ὡς ἀληθεῖς, οὐδέ τις ἂν εἴη γε τοῦτο δεικνύναι δυνάμενος οὐδαμῶς] (4.6–7 [106]).

More experienced readers, Eustathius insists, know well that authors are bound by the literary principle of τὸ πρέπον, 'that which is appropriate' to both character and context.³² Authors—even the divine author of scripture—do not mean every single word to be a state-

meaning of the two" (οἷόν τε γὰρ ἐκ τῆς παραλλήλου συγκρίσεως ἀντεξετάζειν μὲν ὅπως ἔχη δόξης ἐκάτερα τὰ μέρη, τὴν ἀμείνονα δὲ γνώμην ἐξ ἀμφοῖν αἰρεῖσθαι τοὺς φιλόλογους [Eustathius 1.5 (96)]).

³⁰ 2.1 [96].

³¹ In 5.6 [110] Eustathius addresses Origen as 'you advocate of unlawful divination' [ὃ τῆς ἀθεμίτου μαντείας ὑποθήμων].

³² 4.9 [106]: ὡς ἔπρεπεν αὐτῇ.

ment of actual fact, but via προσωποποιία and other narrative conventions they fashion words and craft stories to suit their characters and express multiple intentions—not all of which are their own. One of those means—‘names’ [ὀνόματα]—which Eustathius mentions quickly here, he will further develop later on in the treatise, after he proceeds to put each of the ‘witnesses’ (Saul, the woman, ‘Samuel’) on the stand for cross-examination about the purported event.³³

Eustathius claims that ‘readers in the know’ will be triggered from the outset by the woman’s name to be suspicious of what she says she saw. He argues that the designation ἐγγαστρίμυθος, ‘belly-myther,’ is a deliberate clue to the experienced reader from the author [ὁ ἰδιογράφος] *not* to grant credulity to anything she says. To buttress this counter-claim to Origen’s credulous reading, he offers several other scriptural παραδείγματα of this same practice, such as the prophets of Baal, and the magicians of Egypt, whose fraudulent identity is made manifest to the reader by the author from their first appearance in the narrative (8.1–9.14). Again, Eustathius (with a tone of chastisement) explains this basic literary-critical principle known by experienced readers: “Now the writer by setting forth the name ‘belly-myther’ first disclosed the character for what she was—mad. Then he described the character that had seen the vision *in fashion suitable for people who were in their right mind to understand* that it was about a deranged woman” (7.7–8 [116]).³⁴ True *literati*, he intones, would not confuse such fiction with fact.

In the second half of his treatise Eustathius will return to this argument about the woman’s name, when he engages in an extended proof (16.3–29.4) that Origen has, in this case and in many others, been guilty of blasphemy. Eustathius charges that it is utterly impious for Origen to claim that a *daimonion* could lay claim to the power to raise the dead from Hades—an authority that belongs to God alone.³⁵ Origen’s scandalous attitude in this case, Eustathius claims, is fully harmonious with other acts of impiety his homily commits

³³ For a full discussion of this cross-examination technique, see Mitchell, “Patristic Rhetoric on Allegory.”

³⁴ Cf. 4.8 [106]: “To be sure, if we must at least speak as lovers of the truth, the narrative voice did make this one statement, to the effect that ‘the woman saw Samuel’ (1 Kingdoms 28:12). But the writer said this on the assumption that he was conversing with people who know about a woman acting under demonic influence.”

³⁵ See especially 17.3 [162].

against God, Christ (17.3–19.4), and even the angels and saints (20.1–6). Eustathius' most ironic *exemplum* involves the retort that the same man who argued for the literal truth of the words of the 'belly-myther' in most other exegetical instances deprived literal truth from God, the sacred author of scripture, by allegorizing the text. This argument is not a 'digression,'³⁶ but a brilliant keystone of the refutation launched throughout the treatise.³⁷ This σύγκρισις of Origen's exegesis—not just with Eustathius, but with Origen himself—is meant to doubly discredit the great third-century exegete. In the first place it registers the simple accusation of brash inconsistency: "though he took it in hand to allegorize all the scriptures, he does not blush to understand this passage alone according to the letter" (21.1 [170]). But this charge of hypocrisy [ὑπόκρισις] is just a doorway into a more extensive, and more biting, critique about his reading of the 'belly-myther' at Endor.

The first example Eustathius offers of what he characterizes as Origen's serial allegorizing is his treatment of the trees in the garden of Eden in Genesis. He represents Origen as saying,

When in our reading we ascend from myths [μῦθοι], and from an interpretation according to the letter [ἢ κατὰ τὸ γράμμα ἐκδοχή], let us inquire what those trees are that God cultivates. We say that there are not perceptible trees [αἰσθητὰ ξύλα] in the place (21.2 [172]).³⁸

³⁶ So Simonetti, *La Maga di Endor*, 25: 'una vera e propria digressione.'

³⁷ Fuller discussion in Mitchell, "Patristic Rhetoric on Allegory."

³⁸ This passage is introduced as a quotation, but it is not found in *hom. in 1 Sam.* 5, or elsewhere among Origen's extant writings. Either it is an unknown quote, or another instance of Eustathius' creation of speech in character (*prosopopoeia*) for his 'witness,' Origen, in this case presenting in the form of a doctored quotation that contains what Eustathius regards as the hermeneutical *implication* of Origen's allegorical treatment of the trees in the garden in Genesis. In fact, Origen does not to my knowledge in any known writing use the term μῦθος in reference to scripture, but employs it, much as does Eustathius, as a derisive term for 'pagan' literature (what he calls ὁ ἕξω μῦθος in *frag. in Lament.* 96.6 and elsewhere, as throughout the *contra Celsum*; see also Robert M. Grant, *The Earliest Lives of Jesus* [New York: Harper & Brothers, 1961] 65–66). For example, in the Greek fragments on Genesis preserved in the catenae, Origen disputes the Marcionite Apelles' application of the term to the account of the dimensions of Noah's ark (*hom. in Gen.* 28.14–17): "Wishing to reject the compositions of Moses as unholy, when expressing doubt about this he adds: 'Then the myth is false. Then the scripture is not from God. [ψευδὴς ἄρα ὁ μῦθος· οὐκ ἄρα ἐκ θεοῦ ἡ γραφή].' But this is because Apelles does not understand what sort the 300 cubits, and what sort the 50 cubits and how large the 30 cubits that the scripture names when describing the construction of the ark." Another striking example of Origen's concurrence with Eustathius on the properties of myth (and the handbook definition discussed below) is Origen's comment on John 4 (*comm.*

Eustathius finds Origen condemned by these words:

In allegorizing [τροπολογεῖν] them [the trees] he does not shudder to call ‘myths’ [μῦθους ὀνομάζειν] what God is said to have created and what Moses, the most trustworthy servant of God, wrote (21.3 [172]).

The root of allegorical exegesis, Eustathius assumes and overtly states, is a judgment that the text to be allegorized is a μῦθος. It is here that Eustathius draws the connection with Origen’s ‘literal’ reading of 1 Kingdoms 28, as his very next sentence states:

But in complete opposition [ἀλλ’ ἐκ τῶν ἐναντίων], the very things ‘the myth fabricated in the belly’ [ἅπερ ὁ μῦθος ἐν γαστρὶ πλαττόμενος] obscurely suggests are those that Origen confirms by dogmatic fiat, demonstrating them to be true (21.3 [172]).

Eustathius will return to this point at length later on in the treatise, where he offers two possible explanations for Origen’s misreading of this text, and inattention to the large numbers of scriptural “witnesses” [μάρτυρες] of passages in the Torah and the prophets which forbid necromancy (24.1–26.1): either he is ‘acting stupidly, due to poor training’ [ἀμαθία τοῦτο πράττειν . . . ἀφρόνως] or ‘boldly trafficking with evil intent’ [κακοθελία πραγματεύεσθαι τολμηρῶς] (26.1). Eustathius’ proof for the first option centers on what Origen has missed—the significance of the name ἐγγαστρίμυθος (an oversight that is ironically meant to contrast with his fame for allegorizing names!). Eustathius charges:

But not even her compound name [τὸ σύνθετον ὄνομα] convinces Origen of what sort of bearing she had. For if ἐγγαστρί-μυθος is interpreted by derivation to indicate that “a myth [μῦθος] is fashioned in the belly [ἐν γαστρὶ πεπλασμένον],” and if the composition of a myth is given shape, sheltered persuasively within the belly, then the name [ὄνομα] does not broadcast the truth [ἀλήθεια], but the exact opposite—a lie [ψεῦδος]. Indeed, *those who are conversant with various forms of literary reference know much better* [μακρῷ γοῦν ἄμεινον ἴσασιν οἱ ποικίλαις ὁμιλήσαντες λόγων ἀναφοραῖς] to what genre myth belongs [ὅποιόν ἐστι τὸ γένος αὐτοῦ] (26.10).

In support of the syllogism here, and his rhetorical pretence of wavering between the possibility that Origen has made this mistake because

in *Joh.* 13.17.103, line 5): “But the heterodox do not know what they worship, because it is a fabrication and not truth, a myth and not mystery” [πλάσμα ἐστὶν καὶ οὐκ ἀλήθεια, καὶ μῦθος καὶ “οὐ” μυστήρια].

‘seriously ill with the fever of superstition’ or due to ‘lack of intelligence’ (about how to read texts), Eustathius invokes the rhetorical handbook definition of μῦθος as sure proof of what Origen (and his readers, as φιλόλογοι) should well know:

For the rhetorical handbooks [αἱ ῥητορικαὶ τεχνογραφίαι] clearly show that “a myth is a fabrication composed with persuasive attraction with an eye to some matter of vital importance and utility” [μῦθος ἐστὶ πλάσμα συγκείμενον μετὰ ψυχαγωγίας πρὸς τι τῶν ἐν τῷ βίῳ χρήσει διαφέρον]. Doubtless, they say, it has been called “a fabrication” [πλάσμα] as derived from the verb “to have been fabricated” [πεπλάσθαι]. This is commonly agreed upon [αὐτὸ συνωμολογημένως]. Because it would no longer be considered a myth if it had truly happened [οὐ γὰρ ἂν ἔτι νομίζοιτο μῦθος εἰ γεγονὼς εἴη κατὰ ἀλήθειαν]. And if it is an improvised composition or act of myth-making [εἰ δὲ πλάσματος αὐτοσχεδίου σύνθεσις ἐστὶν ἢ μυθοποιία], it stands convicted of being far from the truth in deed, while it fashions in speech a likeness of concrete events, though it is bereft in fact [πόρρω μὲν ἔργῳ ἀληθείας ἐλήλεγκται, λόγῳ δὲ πραγμάτων ὕλας εἰκονίζει τῇ πράξει λειπομένη] (27.2–3).

Several different definitions of myth are invoked by Eustathius in this paragraph, each of which reflects conventional vocabulary used in schools for the topic of defining myth,³⁹ which was one of the *progymnasmata*, and hence often discussed in rhetorical textbooks.⁴⁰ The fact that students are taught to test myths and to argue for or against their truthfulness shows that there is more ambiguity in rhetorical teaching on the question than Eustathius grants here,⁴¹ but his definitions are well grounded in the standard texts. The first—that a myth is a fabrication—is unmistakably like what we find in the scholiast to Theon, who in turn is citing a definition by Sopater:

Sopater defined myth as follows: a myth is a fabrication composed persuasively in the likeness of things which have truly happened [μῦθος ἐστὶ πλάσμα πιθανῶς πρὸς εἰκόνα τῶν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ συμβαινόντων πραγμάτων συγκείμενον], giving some advice or sub-text for people about

³⁹ As recognized also by Simonetti, *Maga di Endor*, 248: “La definizione di *mythos* che qui dà Eustazio è effettivamente di scuola.”

⁴⁰ It is customarily the first or second of the *progymnasmata* in the collections (George A. Kennedy, *Progymnasmata: Greek Textbooks of Prose Composition and Rhetoric* [Writings from the Greco-Roman World; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003] xiii).

⁴¹ For some of the contours of these debates, and the ambiguity in meanings of μῦθος, see Anne Gangloff, “Mythes, fables et rhétorique à l’époque impériale,” *Rhetorica* 20 (2002): 25–56.

matters. It is ‘a fabrication,’ because it is fabricated so as to seem a real event to us [πλάσμα μὲν, διότι πρὸς τὸ δοκοῦν ἡμῖν πρᾶγμα πλάττεται]; it is ‘persuasive,’ because we fabricate words or events according to the nature or dignity of each creature [γίνεται δὲ πιθανός, ὅτι κατὰ τὴν φύσιν, ἢ τὴν ἀξίαν ἐνὸς ἐκάστου ζώου τοὺς λόγους ἢ τὰ πρᾶγματα πλάττομεν] (*Scholia in Theonem Rhet. Prog.1*).⁴²

Theon himself had earlier (late first century?)⁴³ given the succinct definition of μῦθος that Eustathius clearly knows: “A myth is a false account that portrays the truth” [μῦθος ἐστὶ λόγος ψευδῆς εἰκονίζων ἀλήθειαν].⁴⁴ The currency of some such definition at Antioch can be confirmed, because it is found virtually word for word the same in the *progymnasmata* of Aphthonius (writing at Antioch some decades after Eustathius), who also shows in his examples of κατασκευὴ and ἀνασκευὴ (‘confirmation’ and ‘refutation’) that testing the truth or falsehood of myths (the textbook example of which is the local favorite of Apollo and Daphne) was a central part of the curriculum.⁴⁵ What Eustathius especially wishes to invoke in his argument against Origen is the simple (and somewhat one-sided) connection between myth and falsehood, myth and mere appearance of actual events but no corresponding reality. He offers as an embellishment of the point the commonplace that a fabricated myth is like ‘a life-less scene-painting’ [ἄψυξος σκιαγραφία] which is meant to give a life-like appearance, but does not actually correspond to any reality. Myth-making uses such conventional forms as προσωποποιία and dramatic description with flowery expressions, but, despite its seductive semantic beauty, it always in fact ‘falls short of the truth’ (27.4–7). The rhetorical force of this recital of handbook knowledge is abundantly clear in 29.2, when Eustathius will cluck that even Greek school-boys [Ἑλλήνων παῖδες] are taught to recognize onomatopoeic compositions, and know that the definition of a μῦθος is that it is a ‘false composition’ [πλάσματα ψευδῆ τοὺς μῦθους ὀνομάζουσιν]. The impact is a slam-dunk: the supposedly great scholar Origen has flunked a basic secondary-school lesson!

⁴² Walz 1.259, lines 5–13.

⁴³ Theon is normally placed at the end of the first or beginning of the second century C.E. (so Aune, *Westminster Handbook*, 375, 459; Kennedy, *Progymnasmata*, xii.

⁴⁴ Theon, *prog.* §1 [Spengel 2.59, lines 21–22].

⁴⁵ “Ἔστι δὲ μῦθος λόγος ψευδῆς εἰκονίζων ἀλήθειαν (H. Rabe, ed., *Aphthonius, Progymnasmata*, *Rhetores Graeci* 10 [Leipzig: Teubner, 1926] § 1 [p. 1, lines 4–5]; see also Aphthonius’ discussions of ἀνασκευὴ and κατασκευὴ in § 5 and 6 [pp. 1–2, 10–16]).

And who better to complete the proof than the greatest of all critics of the myths, Plato? Eustathius brings as his last witness the famous repudiation of the myths in *Republic*, bk. 2. Plato is enlisted as an expert witness for Eustathius, because he defined myths as false on the whole (if potentially true in part) and hence dangerous for the youths who imbibe them at the hands of their nurses. Eustathius begins with Plato's seemingly clear-cut distinction between types of λόγος—ἀληθές and ψευδός (*Resp.* 2.376E, 28.1 [200]), and quotes approvingly Socrates' conclusion that it is problematic to 'fashion the souls' of children with myths that are themselves fabrications which should be rejected (*Resp.* 2.377B–C, 28.4 [202]). Eustathius then takes up from Socrates the rhetorical strategy of arguing from greater myths to lesser (*Resp.* 2.377C, 28.5 [202–204]), and applies it to his own particular argument against Origen:

Therefore, if Plato declares the poems of Homer and Hesiod to be false myths [μῦθοι ψευδεῖς]—the very poems which most move the souls of their hearers because of their place in the school curriculum [παιδείας ἔνεκα], not least because by the beauty of their language they rouse the mind to perfect eloquence—how much more will one designate the words the demon-colluding old crone uttered as false myth-making [πόσῳ δὴ μάλλον ὅσους ἢ δαιμονῶσα γραῦς ἀπεφθέγγετο λόγους οὐχὶ μυθοποιίας ὀριεῖται τις εἶναι ψευδεῖς], when even the name “belly-myther” includes this meaning [καὶ τοῦνομα τῆς ἐγγαστριμύθου τοῦτον ὑπαγορεύει τὸν νοῦν]? (29.1 [204])

After concluding his argument with this proof, Eustathius ends his treatise with a verbal picture of his own—a frightening specter of the devil spinning myths out of the belly of the ‘old crone’ and appearing in multiple and nefarious guises to deceive the credulous (30.1–5). But despite these persuasive powers his frenetic activity shares with all *mythopoiesis*, the devil cannot have raised the dead, Eustathius insists, because that power must be reserved solely for God and the divine Son. The upshot of this argument is so clear as not to require statement: anyone who thinks otherwise (i.e., Origen) is both blasphemous and demon-colluding.

Conclusion

Eustathius' employment of the ‘urbanity topos’ is meant to rebuke Origen for not even having learned his basic lessons at school. He

brings the rhetorical handbooks forward as an elementary exercise to shame the great Christian philosopher and exegete by showing him to have 'flunked' an early, simple lesson in literary acculturation that even school boys have at their ready command. Beside its inherent interest as a keen product of fourth-century literary sensibilities, the Eustathius-Origen exchange demonstrates unequivocally that the two shared the same rhetorical education (*paideia*) which had inculcated in them a range of expectations for the composition and analysis of literature. In this case, the *progymnasmata* involving the topic of *mythos* are expected by Eustathius to be readily known by the audience of readers he seeks to persuade to his side of this particular interpretive dispute (Origen being dead, of course, and presumably beyond remedial education). The implication of his argument is as sharp as it can be: someone who so utterly contramands the simple rhetorical handbooks is either dumber than he presents himself, or prevaricating.

Returning from this rather rare instance of handbook citation in an interpretive work to the larger question with which we began, about the rhetorical training and acumen of early Christian authors, we can see with more particularity why it is on the whole unrealistic to expect the proof of rhetorical effects and influences should rest on direct citation of the handbooks by authors.⁴⁶ Furthermore, when we do find such direct references to the rhetorical handbooks we need to be on full alert for the rhetorical purpose which is being exercised by this deliberately pedantic and caustic appeal to what is so obvious that among educated men it should not require explicit statement.

⁴⁶ To this should be added another consideration, as well: it is in the treatise genre that we find the appeal to rhetorical τέχναι, but not in the homily. The extent to which early Christian exegetical literature was homiletic makes the chances of finding such direct reference to school textbooks even more remote.

VIEWS OF MENTAL ILLNESS AMONG GREEKS, ROMANS, AND CHRISTIANS

Robert M. Grant

The present essay, in a volume dedicated to David E. Aune, who has explored early Christian ecstatic experience and magic in the context of the Greco-Roman world,¹ addresses a related phenomenon—mental illness and psychotherapy.² What were ancient understandings of mental illness? How were various types of psychological maladies treated? Were Christians any or much different from their contemporaries in this regard? We begin with a survey and anthology of passages from Greco-Roman authors, and then see how the New Testament and early Christian writings fit into their world in this regard.

1. *Physicians and Mental Illness*

1.1. *Hippocrates*

The classical medical writers regularly discuss mental illnesses, beginning perhaps as early as the fourth century B.C.E. with the treatise of Hippocrates *On the Sacred Disease*—a significant title because the author actually rejects the concept of a ‘sacred disease’ in reference to epilepsy and other seizures. It is “not more divine or more sacred than other diseases, but has a natural cause.” The author analyzes the misappropriation historically.

¹ David E. Aune, *Prophecy in Early Christianity and the Ancient Mediterranean World* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983); *Revelation* (3 vols.; WBC 52A–C; Dallas: Word Books; Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997–98).

² I distinguish the latter from psychology and psychiatry, both of which are more theoretical than practical. Cf. W. V. Harris, *Restraining Rage: The Ideology of Anger Control in Classical Antiquity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 366–67: “There never was in antiquity any psychotherapy in the Freudian or post-Freudian sense. . . .”

Those who first attributed a sacred character to this malady were like the magicians, charlatans, and quacks of our own day, men who claim great piety and superior knowledge. Being at a loss, and having no treatment that would help, they concealed and sheltered themselves behind superstition and called this illness sacred, so that their own utter ignorance might not be manifest.³

And it is cured like other diseases. Therefore “whoever knows how to cause moist or dry, hot or cold, in men by regimen, can cure this disease also, if he distinguishes the seasons for useful treatment, without having recourse to purifications and magic.”⁴ So the treatise ends. It was clearly intended to differentiate medicine from magic, though not necessarily from conventional religion.⁵ The Roman medical author Celsus claimed that Hippocrates, though a pupil of the philosopher Democritus, was the first to differentiate medicine from philosophy.⁶ In the fourth century the philosopher Plato could associate the “false opinions” of those who were either mentally disturbed or dreaming. Madmen, he noted, sometimes supposed that they were gods, while in sleep others thought they were birds and flew as if on wings.⁷ Plato offers no cure for the aberrations. Similarly, as Sorabji points out, the Stoics “could not deal with what we call mental illness.”⁸

1.2. *Asclepiades*

The famous physician Asclepiades came from Bithynia to Rome in the first century B.C.E. According to Pliny, he was a charlatan who had taken up medicine after rhetoric.⁹ In fact Asclepiades, whose pupils founded the Methodical school of medicine, was “a pioneer in the humane treatment of mental disorders, [who] had insane persons freed from confinement in the dark¹⁰ and treated them by using

³ *The Sacred Disease* 1 (LCL, translated by W. H. S. Jones, pp. 138–41).

⁴ *Ibid.* 21, pp. 182–83.

⁵ *Ibid.* 4, pp. 144–51.

⁶ Celsus, *On Medicine*, Forward 8.

⁷ Plato, *Theatetus* 158B.

⁸ R. Sorabji, *Emotion and Peace of Mind* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) 2.

⁹ Pliny, *Natural History* 26.12–20; but his account is confused and false; “clearly due to confusion with the rhetor of the same name from Myrlea,” F. Kudlien in *KP* 1 (1964): 117, 36–49.

¹⁰ Celsus 3.18.5.

occupational therapy, music,¹¹ soporifics (especially wine), and exercise.”¹² He became famous after he stopped the premature burial of a man only apparently dead.¹³ The astrological poet Manilius alludes to this event as an example of the triumph of the stars over the weakness of medical men. “Some carried out to burial have returned even from the grave, gifted with a twofold life while others have scarcely one. A slight ailment kills, while one more serious allows of a reprieve; therapy fails, rational practice is baffled, and attention harms, while negligence proves beneficial and delay often brings a cessation of complaints; and nourishment injures, while poison spares the patient.”¹⁴

1.3. *Lucretius*

The Roman Epicurean poet Lucretius briefly discusses mental illness in the third book of his poem *De natura rerum* (459–525). The mind like the body is subject to cares, grief, and fear and is affected by diseases of the body, becoming demented, speaking in delirium and carried into lethargy. Being drunk also hurts the mind through the body, while “we have often seen” epileptic attacks, in which the patient “falls down, foams at the mouth, groans and shudders, raves, grows rigid, twists, pants irregularly, and tires his limbs in contortions.” This happens “because the violence of the disease dispersed through the frame sets it in a turmoil, and drives out the spirit in foam even as in the salt sea the waves boil under the mighty strength of the winds.” Lucretius adds that “we see that the mind like a sick body can be healed and changed by medicine,” though he does not say what the medicine is. The mind is mortal, however, and it sickens with bodily disease. “Add madness, peculiar to the mind, and oblivion. Add that it is drowned in the black waters of lethargy” (828–29).

¹¹ Censorinus, *On the Natal Day* 12.4 on Asclepiades restoring phrenetics by this means.

¹² *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (Micropaedia). 1.572 (1974).

¹³ Celsus 2.6.16; cf. Pliny, *Natural History* 7.124. Compare Mark 5:39 and parallels (not dead but asleep); Luke 7:11–15 (met bier).

¹⁴ Manilius, *Astronomica* 4.71–76.

1.4. *Celsus*

Asclepiades's works are lost, but he was a primary source for the Latin encyclopedist Celsus. During the reign of Tiberius, Celsus compiled his three books *On Medicine* and treated mental illnesses as physical, discussing them just after fevers¹⁵ and noting that they "cannot be assigned to any definite part" of the body (3.18.1).

Celsus (3.18) discusses three types of insanity. The first (1–16) is mania, but acute and with fever. Celsus says the Greeks call it *phrenesis* (a term which appears in Cicero,¹⁶ Seneca,¹⁷ Martial,¹⁸ and Juvenal,¹⁹ and is equivalent to frenzy). The second (17–18) is depression (*tristitia*), which seems caused by black bile (melancholy). The third type may be mania again (3.18.19–24). There are two kinds, for some patients are deceived by phantoms,²⁰ not by the mind itself, as the poets say Ajax was deceived when mad, or Orestes [Euripides].²¹ Celsus writes that some become foolish in spirit, sometimes with delirium caused by fear, while others suffer from hysteria.²²

1.5. *Soranus (apud Caelius Aurelianus)*

The treatise on gynecology by the early second-century physician Soranus is extant in Greek, but his even more important study of *Acute and Chronic Diseases* must be recovered from the Latin treatise of Caelius Aurelianus, possibly made in fifth-century Numidia.²³ The

¹⁵ An interesting comparison is the setting of a fever (Mark 1:29–31) just after the setting of epilepsy (1:23–26).

¹⁶ Cicero, *On Divination* 1.81 (with *cardiaci*); cf. the notes of A. S. Pease, 243; cf. Tertullian, *On the Soul* 43.8 (with *lethargus*).

¹⁷ Seneca, *Dialogue* 2.13.1 ("What physician grows angry at a phrenetic?"); 3.13.3; 5.26.1; *Epistle* 15.1.

¹⁸ Martial 11.28 (= *insanus*).

¹⁹ Juvenal 14.136 (it is madness and *phrenesis* to live in poverty so that you may die).

²⁰ With this kind of analysis we may compare the appearances of the risen Jesus. Were they hallucinations of the disciples? Two gospels say that Jesus walking on the lake of Galilee seemed to be a 'phantom' (Matt 14:29, Mark 6:49), though Luke 24:37 insists that the risen Lord was not a spirit, and Ignatius (*Smyrnaeans* 3.2) says he was not an incorporeal demon. At the peak of Anglo-Catholic Modernism, N. P. Williams could call the appearances 'veridical hallucinations' (a category that continues to be parlayed today in certain circles).

²¹ Ajax went mad because the arms of the dead Achilles were 'adjudged to Odysseus' (Sophocles). See Sextus Empiricus, *Against Professors* 7.249, for Orestes.

²² Celsus 4.27.1; treated by torments, 3.18.21.

²³ I. E. Drabkin, *Caelius Aurelianus On Acute Diseases and On Chronic Diseases* (Chicago:

first long book of this treatise is chiefly devoted to the form of madness called phrenitis ('inflammation of the brain'), while Book II includes lethargy and catalepsy. These are 'acute' diseases; other mental ailments are discussed as 'chronic.' Soranus gives detailed descriptions of mental illnesses, and recommendations for treatment. Topical selections below will give a sense of his approach, which we may presume to be typical rather than idiosyncratic.

Attacks of Epilepsy

As the disease emerges and takes hold of the body, the patient is bereft of his senses. As the attack gains full sway, in some cases the patient remains completely immobile; his mouth is open, face pale, respiration slow, and pulse large; he is overcome as if by a deep sleep. But in other cases the patient suffers a convulsive seizure; his limbs are flung about and keep shaking. His face and eyes are distorted, and this condition often persists, so that even after the attack he continues to squint. On the other hand, those who have been successfully treated over a period of time retain their natural appearance without distortion. Other symptoms occurring during the attack are: wheezing in the throat, hiccoughs, reddening of the face, distention of the blood vessels, sometimes a breaking-off of the pulse and respiration followed by resumption after a time, eyelids remaining unclosed, clenching and gnashing of the teeth, tongue protruding so that it is often injured as the teeth strike it or even bite it, elevation of the precordia, involuntary discharge of feces and urine, dewlike sweat appearing on the rigid body, in some cases the utterance of confused sounds, and before the attack abates an effusion of foam through mouth and nose.²⁴

The Nature of Mania

In the *Phaedrus* Plato declares that there are two kinds of mania, one involving a mental strain that arises from a bodily cause or origin, the other divine or inspired, with Apollo as the source of the inspiration. This latter kind, he says, is now called 'divination,' but in earlier times was called 'madness;' that is, the Greeks now call it 'prophetic inspiration' (μαντική), though in remote antiquity it was called 'mania.' . . . The Stoics also say that madness is of two kinds, but they hold that one kind consists in lack of wisdom, so that they consider every imprudent person mad; the other kind, they say, involves loss of reason and a

The University of Chicago Press, 1950); G. Bendz, *Caeli Aureliani Tardae Passiones Tardae Passiones* (Corpus Medicorum Latinorum 6.1–2; Berlin: Akademie, 1990, 1993); cf. F. Kudlien in *KP* 1 (1964): 994–95.

²⁴ Caelius Aurelianus, *Chronic Diseases* 1.64–65 (Drabkin, 481; Bendz, 466).

concomitant bodily affection. . . . Mania is an impairment of reason; it is chronic and without fever and in these respects may be distinguished from phrenitis. . . . Mania occurs more frequently in young and middle-aged men, rarely in old men, and most infrequently in children and women. Sometimes it strikes suddenly, at other times it takes hold gradually. Sometimes it arises from hidden causes, at other times from observable causes, such as exposure to intense heat, the taking of severe cold, indigestion, frequent and uncontrolled drunkenness (κραυιάλη in Greek), continual sleeplessness, excesses of venery, anger, grief, anxiety, or superstitious fear, a shock or blow, intense straining of the senses and the mind in study, business, or other ambitious pursuits, the drinking of drugs, especially those intended to excite love (φιληρόποτα in Greek), the removal of long-standing hemorrhoids or varices, and, finally, the suppression of the menses in women.²⁵

Prophetic Power and Hallucinations in Mania

When mania lays hold of the mind, it manifests itself now in anger, now in merriment, now in sadness or futility, and now, as some relate, in an overpowering fear of things which are quite harmless. Thus the patient will be afraid of caves or will be obsessed by the fear of falling into a ditch or will dread other things which may for some reason inspire fear.

The ancients also associated madness with a kind of prophetic power. And Demetrius calls mania a strain imposed on the mind for a brief period, saying that some persons in a sudden moment of confusion are so terror-stricken that they lose their memory of the past. In fact, Apollonius tells us that, when the grammarian Artemidorus was lying on the sand, he was frightened by the ponderous approach of a crocodile; his mind was so affected by the sudden sight of the reptile's motion that he imagined that his left leg and hand had been eaten by the animal, and he lost his memory even of literature . . . One victim of madness fancied himself a sparrow, another a cock, another an earthen vessel, another a brick, another a god, another an orator, another a tragic actor, another a comic actor, another a stalk of grain and asserted that he occupied the center of the universe, another cried like a baby and begged to be carried in the arms. . . .²⁶

²⁵ *Ibid.* 1.144, 146–47 (Drabkin, 534–37; Bendz, 513–19); *Phaedrus* 265B.

²⁶ *Ibid.* 1.150–2 (Drabkin, 538–41; Bendz, 518–21); cf. Aretaeus 3.6.5 (C. Hude, ed., *Aretaeus* [Corpus Medicorum Graecorum 2; Berlin: in aedibus Academiae scientiarum, 2nd ed., 1956] 42, line 18).

Relation to Philosophy

Those who imagine that the disease is chiefly an affection of the soul and only secondarily of the body are mistaken. For no philosopher has ever set forth a successful treatment for this disease; moreover, before the mind is affected, the body itself shows visible symptoms.²⁷

Yet philosophy can aid therapy, if the patient

is willing to hear discussions of philosophers, he should be afforded the opportunity. For by their words philosophers help to banish fear, sorrow, and wrath, and in so doing make no small contribution to the health of the body.²⁸

Treatment of Phrenitis

The first step in all treatments is to have the patient in a proper place. Thus in phrenitis the patient should lie in a place completely sequestered, so that he may not be disturbed by the voices of passers-by. The place should be lighted through high windows; for it often happens in this disease that unguarded patients in their madness jump out of windows. . . . There should be no paintings in the room, lest they cause the patient to experience apparitions (Greek φαντασίαι) and to become more excited or burst into laughter. And it is most unreasonable, on the one hand, to keep many people from visiting or gathering near the patient and, on the other, to make possible further injury to the patient's mind through paintings. For by continually gazing at paintings he is led astray as to what is real. Similarly avoid bright colors on walls, spreads, or covers, since these colors will jump out, as it were, and strike the vision.

Treatment of Mania

As for the treatment, we hold that measures should be taken similar to those employed in epilepsy. Thus, to begin with, have the patient lie in a moderately light and warm room. The room should be perfectly quiet, unadorned by paintings, not lighted by low windows, and on the ground floor rather than on the upper stories, for victims of mania have often jumped out of windows. And the bed should be firmly fastened down. It should face away from the entrance to the room so that the patient will not see those who enter. In this way the danger of exciting and aggravating his madness by letting him see many different faces will be avoided. And the bedclothes should be soft . . . Rub the patient's limbs and hold them gently. If any part of

²⁷ Caelius Aurelianus, *Chronic Diseases* 1.154 (Drabkin, 540–41; Bendz, 522–23).

²⁸ *Ibid.* 1.166–67 (Drabkin, 550–51; Bendz, 528–29).

the body is shaken by a throbbing movement, relieve it with warmth, applying soft scoured wool to the head, too, the neck, and circularly to the chest. Also employ a fomentation of warm olive oil, sometimes adding, for its soothing properties, fenugreek water (obtained from a decoction of fenugreek; but see that it is not thick), or else an infusion of marsh mallow, or flaxseed. Then wash the patient's mouth and have him take a drink of warm water.

Do not permit many people, especially strangers, to enter the room. And instruct the servants to correct the patient's aberrations while giving them a sympathetic hearing. That is, have the servants, on the one hand, avoid the mistake of agreeing with everything the patient says, corroborating all his fantasies, and thus increasing his mania; and, on the other hand, have them avoid the mistake of objecting to everything he says and thus aggravating the severity of the attack. Let them rather at times lead the patient on by yielding to him and agreeing with him, and at other times indirectly correct his illusions by pointing out the truth. And if the patient begins to get out of bed and cannot easily be restrained, or is distressed especially because of loneliness, use a large number of servants and have them covertly restrain him by massaging his limbs; in this way they will avoid upsetting him.

If the patient is excited when he sees people, bind him without doing any injury. First cover his limbs with wool and then fasten with a bandage. Now if there is a person whom the patient has customarily feared or respected, he should not be brought into the sickroom repeatedly. For this frequent repetition gives rise to a lack of regard.²⁹ But when circumstances require it, as when the patient does not submit to the application of a remedy, this person should then be brought in to overcome the patient's stubbornness, by inspiring fear or respect. And if you observe that the light is upsetting his mind, shade his eyes but let the rest of his body be touched by the light. . . .³⁰

Mistaken Treatments

These include: keeping patients in dark rooms; putting them on a starvation diet, using cooling substances, bleeding, promoting urination and purging the bowels, making the patient drunk, playing melodies on a pipe, love (*amor*).³¹ "In the opinion of Soranus anyone who believes

²⁹ 'Familiarity breeds contempt' (*parit frequentia contemptum*), *Acute Diseases* 1.65 (Drabkin, 42; Bendz, 58).

³⁰ *Chronic Diseases* 1.155–58 (Drabkin, 542–45; Bendz, 522–25).

³¹ *Ibid.* 1.171–79 (Drabkin, 552–59; Bendz, 532–37). In fact, Caelius rejects love as a 'cure' for eight different diseases.

that a severe disease can be banished by music and song is the victim of a silly delusion."³²

The Signs of Melancholia

Mental anguish and distress, dejection, silence, animosity toward members of the household, sometimes a desire to live and at other times a longing for death, suspicion on the part of the patient that a plot is being hatched against him, weeping without reason, meaningless muttering, and, again, occasional joviality; precordial distention, especially after eating, coldness of the limbs, mild sweat, a sharp pain in the esophagus or cardia extending even to the region between the shoulder blades (Greek μετάσπρενον),³³ heaviness of the head, complexion greenish-black or somewhat blue, body attenuated, weakness, indigestion with belching that has a foul, i.e., a fummy, fetid, or fishy odor; intestinal cramps; vomiting, sometimes ineffectual and at other times bringing up yellowish, rusty, or black matter; similar discharges through the anus. In the remission there is an abatement of these symptoms, or at least a clearing-up of most of them.³⁴

1.6. *Ptolemy on Psychic Ailments*

The astrologer and astronomer Ptolemy discusses psychic ailments, especially diseases of the soul that are beyond measure and as it were pathological, which relate to the whole nature and concern both the intelligent and the passive parts of the soul. Patients are to be differentiated as follows: (1) epileptic; (2) insane;³⁵ and (3) afflicted by demons and with water on the brain (dropsy).

All these afflictions, in Ptolemy's view, are incurable, because they are caused by celestial powers.

In epilepsy the planets involve victims in continuous attacks, notoriety, and deadly peril; in madness and seizures they cause alienation of friends, tearing of clothes, abusive language, and the like; in demonic seizures or water on the brain, possessions, confessions, torments, and similar manifestations.

³² *Chronic Diseases* 5.23 (Drabkin, 920–21; Bendz, 866–69). This view contradicts that of Asclepiades.

³³ Hence the recommended cure is a topical remedy (*Chronic Diseases* 1.183 [Drabkin, 562–63; Bendz, 540–41]).

³⁴ *Chronic Diseases* 1.181–82 (Drabkin, 560–63; Bendz, 538–39).

³⁵ Melancholia, mania, and epilepsy are also physical (*Tetrabiblos* 3.12 [LCL 435, translated by F. E. Robbins] 328, line 16).

On this theory, specific maladies can be aligned with different plants:

Of the places that possess the configuration, those of the sun and Mars aid in causing mania; those of Jupiter and Mercury, epilepsy; those of Venus, divine possession and public confession; and those of Saturn and the moon, gatherings of water and demonic seizures.³⁶

The symptoms of these diseases are not necessarily connected with astrology. But Ptolemy also notes that when Mercury “holds the lordship of death,” it portends death by “madness, derangement, melancholy, falling sickness, epilepsy, and coughing and related diseases.”³⁷

1.7. *Aretaeus of Cappadocia*

The physician and medical writer Aretaeus probably lived in the latter half of the second century and was therefore a contemporary of Galen, though neither of them mentions the other. The medical doctrine of Aretaeus comes from Archigenes, who worked at Rome under Trajan,³⁸ though he insists that in treating acute diseases the physician should not “apply his mind entirely to the writings of others.”³⁹

Aretaeus sets forth a general theory of mental disease, based on the four humors, in his *Causes and Symptoms of Chronic Diseases*. Headache when extended can lead to vertigo. With yellow bile comes mania; with black, melancholy; with phlegm, epilepsy. Then he turns to a discussion that includes melancholy, mania, and epilepsy.⁴⁰

Does Love (Eros) Cure Melancholy?

The story goes that when someone who was incurably affected fell in love with a girl, and the physicians could bring him no relief, love cured him. But I think he was originally in love, was dejected and spiritless from being unsuccessful with the girl, and appeared melancholic to the townspeople. He too did not recognize the love, but when he attached himself to love for the girl, he ceased from dejection and

³⁶ Ptolemy, *Tetrabiblos* 3.14 (LCL, 364–67).

³⁷ *Ibid.* 4.9. Falling sickness was usually identified with epilepsy, however.

³⁸ Text in Hude, ed., generally reliable translation by F. Adams, *The Extant Works of Aretaeus, the Cappadocian* (London: Sydenham Society, 1856). Cf. F. Kudlien, *Untersuchungen zu Aretaios von Kappadozien*, 1964.

³⁹ Aretaeus 6.11.7 (Adams, 453; Hude, 143, lines 9–10).

⁴⁰ *Ibid.* 3.2–6 (Adams, 294–304; Hude, 36–44).

drove out anger and grief. He woke from his low spirits with joy and restored his understanding with love as physician.⁴¹

Susceptibility to Mania

Those prone to mania are such as are naturally wrathful, irritable, of active habits, of an easy disposition, joyous, childlike; likewise those whose disposition inclines to the opposite condition, namely, such as are sluggish, sorrowful, slow to learn, but patient in labor, and who when they learn anything soon forget it; those likewise are more prone to melancholy, who have formerly been in a mad condition. But in those periods of life with which much heat and blood are associated, persons are most given to mania, namely, those about puberty, young men, and such as possess general vigor. But those in whom the heat is enkindled by black bile, and whose form of constitution is inclined to dryness, most readily pass into a state of melancholy. The diet which disposes to it is associated with voracity, immoderate repletion, drunkenness, lechery, venereal desires. Women also sometimes become affected with mania from want of purgation of the system, when the uterus has attained the development of maturity; but the others do not readily fall into mania, yet, if they do, their cases are difficult to manage. These are the causes; and they stir up the disease also, if from any cause an accustomed evacuation of blood, or of bile, or of sweating be stopped.⁴²

Symptoms of Mania

Those with whose madness joy is associated laugh, play, dance night and day, and sometimes go openly to the market crowned, as if victors in some contest of skill; this form is inoffensive to those around. Others have madness attended with anger; and these sometimes rend their clothes and kill their keepers, and lay violent hands upon themselves. . . . But the modes are infinite in those who are ingenious and docile—self-taught⁴³ astronomy, spontaneous philosophy, poetry truly from the Muses. . . . In the uneducated, the common employments are the carrying of loads, and working at clay—they are artificers or masons. They are also given to extraordinary fantasies; for one is afraid of the fall of the oil flasks, and another will not drink, as fancying himself a brick, and fearing that he would be dissolved by the liquid.⁴⁴

⁴¹ *Ibid.* 3.5.8 (Adams, 300; Hude, 41, lines 4–11).

⁴² *Ibid.* 3.6.1–4 (Adams, 301–2; Hude, 41, line 27 to 42, line 9).

⁴³ For ἀδίδακτος Adams (p. 60 n. 3) suggests αὐτοδίδακτος, self-taught (Hude does not accept this).

⁴⁴ Aretaeus 3.6.4–5 (Adams, 302; Hude, 42, lines 9–20); cf. Caelius Aurelianus, *Chronic Diseases* 1.152 (Drabkin, 540–41; Bendz, 520–21).

This story also is told: A certain joiner was a skilful artisan while in the house, would measure, chop, plane, mortice, and adjust wood, and finish the work of the house correctly . . . But when he had got out of sight of the domestics, or of the work and the place where it was performed, he became completely mad; yet if he returned speedily he recovered his reason again; such a bond of connection was there between the locality and his understanding. The cause of the disease is seated in the head and hypochondriac region, sometimes commencing in both together, and the one imparting it to the other. In mania and melancholy, the main cause is seated in the bowels, as in phrenitis it is mostly seated in the head and the senses. For in these the senses are perverted, so that they see things not present as if they were present, and objects which do not appear to others, manifest themselves to them; whereas persons who are mad see only as others see, but do not form a correct judgment on what they have seen.⁴⁵

Religious Mania

Aretaeus treats certain famous behaviors as a particular type:

Another form of mania. Some cut their members in a pious fantasy, as if propitiating particular gods. This is a madness of the apprehension solely; for in other respects they are sane. They are roused by the flute, and mirth, or by drinking, or by the admonition of those around them. This madness is of divine origin, and if they recover from the madness, they are cheerful and free of care, as if initiated to the god; but yet they are pale and attenuated, and long remain weak from the pains of the wounds.⁴⁶

Cure of Phrenetics

The patient ought to be laid in a house of moderate size, and mild temperature—in a warm situation, if winter, and in one that is cool and humid, if summer; in spring and autumn, to be regulated according to the season. Then the patient himself, and all those in the house, are to be ordered to preserve quiet; for persons in frenzy are sharp of hearing, are sensitive to noise, and easily become delirious. The walls should be smooth, level, without projections, not adorned with friezes or paintings; for painting on a wall is an excitant. . . . Length and breadth of the couch moderate, so that the patient may neither

⁴⁵ Aretaeus 3.6.6–7 (Adams, 302–3; Hude, 42, line 18 to 43, line 4).

⁴⁶ *Ibid.* 3.6.11 (Adams, 304; Hude, 43, line 29 to 44, line 4). Adams (304, n. 1) cites Petit for ‘the worship of Cybele,’ with references to Catullus 63 [78–93] and Apuleius *Metamorphoses* 8 [27–28]. Just before this passage, Aretaeus (3.6.10) may possibly anticipate Christian hermits when he refers to madmen who “flee from mankind to the desert and live by themselves.”

toss about in a broad one nor fall out of a narrow bed. In plain bed-clothes, so that there may be no inducement to pick at their nap. But on a soft bed, for a hard one is offensive to the nerves; as in phrenetics, above all others, the nerves especially suffer, for they are subject to convulsions. Access of their dearest friends is to be permitted; stories and conversation not of an exciting character; for they ought to be gratified in everything, especially in cases where the delirium tends to anger. Whether they are to be laid in darkness or light must be determined by the nature of the attack . . . It is a good symptom, too, when they become of a sound mind, and their delirium abates, on exposure to the light. Abstinence from food should not be prolonged; food should be rather liquid, scanty, and frequently administered, for food soothes the soul; the proper time for giving it is during the remissions, both of the fever and the delirium. . . .⁴⁷

Aids to Sleep

Whatever is familiar to any one is provocative of sleep to him. Thus, to the sailor, repose in a boat, and being carried about on the sea, the sound of the beach, the murmur of the waves, the boom of the winds, and the scent of the sea and of the ship. But to the musician the accustomed notes of his flute in stillness; or playing on the harp or lyre, or the exercise of musical children with song. To a teacher, discourse on children's stories. Different persons are soothed to sleep by different means.⁴⁸

Unlikely Cures for Epilepsy

It is told that the brain of a vulture, and the heart of a raw cormorant, and the domestic weasel, when eaten, remove the disease; but I have never tried these things. However, I have seen persons holding a cup below the wound of a man recently slaughtered, and drinking a draught of the blood.⁴⁹ O the present, the mighty necessity, which compels one to remedy the evil by such a wicked abomination! And whether even they recovered by this means no one could tell me for certain. There is another story of the liver of a man having been eaten. However, I leave these things to be described by those who would bear to try such means.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Aretaeus 5.1.1–3 (Adams, 378–79; Hude, 91, line 12 to 92, line 10).

⁴⁸ *Ibid.* 5.1.15 (Adams, 383; Hude, 94, line 29 to 95, line 3).

⁴⁹ See Minucius Felix, cited below.

⁵⁰ Aretaeus 7.4.7–8 (Adams, 470; Hude, 154, lines 1–9).

Better Cures for Epilepsy

It is necessary to regulate the diet, in respect to everything that is to be done either by others or by the patient himself. Now nothing must be omitted, nor anything unnecessarily done; and more especially we must administer everything which will do the slightest good, or even that will do harm; for many unseemly sights, sounds, and tastes, and multitudes of smells, are tests of the disease. Everything, therefore, is to be particularly attended to. Much sleep induces fatness, torpor, and mistiness of the senses, but moderate sleep is good. An evacuation of the bowels, especially of flatulence and phlegm, is very good after sleep. Walks that are long, straight, without turnings, well ventilated, under trees of myrtle and laurel, or among acrid and fragrant herbs, such as calamint, penny-royal, thyme, and mint; so much the better if wild and indigenous, but if not, among cultivated; in these places, prolonged physical therapy, which also should be on a level line. It is a good thing to take journeys, but not by a river side, so that he may not gaze upon the stream (for the current of a river occasions vertigo), nor where he may see anything turned round, such as a rolling-top, for he is too weak to preserve the animal spirits (πνεῦμα) steady, which are, therefore, whirled about in a circle, and this circular motion is provocative of vertigo and of epilepsy.⁵¹

1.8. *Galen*

We should not suppose that Galen, in spite of his pride in his own rationality and, indeed, omni-competence, was dissociated from religion and, specifically, from the use of dreams. He tells us that he wrote his treatise *On the Use of the Parts of the Body* in response to what ‘a certain god commanded.’⁵² Indeed, E. R. Dodds was able to point to his belief that “he has saved many lives by acting on the advice of dreams.”⁵³

Melancholy

On Galen’s first visit to Rome, he was asked to visit the famous and rich L. Martius, who was afflicted by melancholy every year. From

⁵¹ *Ibid.* 7.4.8–10 (Adams, 470; Hude, 154, lines 9–24).

⁵² Galen, *Use of the Parts of the Body* 10.14, 2.110, line 7 (ed. Helmreich); cf. P. C. Miller, *Dreams in Late Antiquity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 46, for further instances of divine guidance.

⁵³ Dodds, *Pagan and Christian in an Age of Anxiety* (New York: Norton, 1970), 45; Galen, 16.222 (ed. Kühn et al.). For Galen and dreams see Miller, *Dreams in Late Antiquity*, 106–8.

Martius' coloring Galen decided it was melancholy, and it stopped after a purge. He urged Martius to purge in the spring, and in autumn too if necessary; an immediate cure followed the spring purge.⁵⁴ In his view there were two kinds of derangement (ἐκτασις)—mania and melancholia.⁵⁵

Amnesia and Herbal Remedies

Galen gives a long account of an attempt he made in his early years as a physician to restore a patient's memory. He tracked down Archigenes' treatise try to find which of the imbalances in the four humors might be responsible, so that he might craft just the right topical remedy (hence treating it like any other ailment, with physiological causes). In scholarly fashion Galen records his research

for the counsel of those who (to repeat) are ready to abandon the folly of school dogmatism. I will cite the first phrases of the book in which Archigenes speaks of treating lack of memory, or oblivion, or forgetting, or loss of memory, or of its trouble, no matter what name one gives to the affection concerned or, if it is not a question of affection, to the illness, to the symptom, to the weakness. For our scholars discuss that subject, while the matter presents only a minimal interest, or rather absolutely none, for the treatment to be applied.⁵⁶

We know of ancient herbal treatments from various authors. White hellebore was an emetic supposed to help cure epilepsy, vertigo, melancholia, insanity, and many other ailments,⁵⁷ while black hellebore was a purge. According to Celsus, black hellebore is given to those with black bile or insane with it (2.12.1), while white is prescribed for *comitialis* (epilepsy), *insania* (2.13.2), *tristitia* (depression) from black bile (3.18.17), and phantoms. Black hellebore is used as a purge for the depressed, for the hilarious (should we call them 'manic?'), but white as an emetic (3.18.20) and for the lethargic (comatose), who are stimulated by the offensive smell of hellebore (3.20.1). One

⁵⁴ Galen, *Commentary on Hippocrates, Book I of Predictions* 1.15 (16.456–57 ed. Kühn et al.). He uses purges for mania, epilepsy, and melancholy, *On the Use of Medicated Purges* 5 (11.341 ed. Kühn et al.).

⁵⁵ *Introduction or Medicus* 13 (14.740–41 ed. Kühn et al.).

⁵⁶ P. Moraux, *Galien de Pergame: Souvenirs d'un médecin* (Paris: "Belles Lettres," 1985), 56–58, from *On Parts Affected* 3.5 (8.147–150 ed. Kühn et al.).

⁵⁷ Pliny 25.60 (on the wonders of hellebore, 25.48–60). W. G. Spencer, *Celsus On Medicine* (LCL, vol. 1, p.), lix, notes that it was "especially employed for cases of mental excitement and as a treatment for the insane" (with references to Celsus, Books 2 and 3).

can move the bowels of an epileptic with black hellebore (3.23.2), and indeed use hellebore both black and white for epilepsy (3.23.5).⁵⁸ It is obvious that the distinction between black and white does not amount to much.⁵⁹

As for aids to memory in particular, Pliny assures us that when white hellebore, derived from a kind of lily, became popular, "most scholars took it regularly to sharpen their brains for their studies." Indeed, "Carneades, preparing to reply to the books of Zeno, <purged himself with hellebore>."⁶⁰ Conversely, opponents claimed that the Stoic philosopher Chrysippus took hellebore to overcome his insanity.⁶¹ This is obviously a school debating point. We meet it again when enemies of the Christian scholar Origen claim that he used a medicinal plant to help his memory but do not say what it was.⁶²

Antidotes for Poison

Drugs were also used for or against poisoning. Galen tells how he saw the emperor Marcus Aurelius taking a pill "the size of an Egyptian bean" every day for his security, "without water or wine or any such emollient" (He took drugs mixed with honey daily for his health).⁶³ His practice was fairly well known, since Lucian ridicules a Syrian book collector for supposing that the emperor was so much 'sauced up' by mandrake that he did not know the Syrian's true character.⁶⁴ Dio Cassius insists that Marcus never ate by day except for the drug called 'theriac' (antidote; the English word 'treacle'). He took this drug not so much because he feared anything, says Dio, but because his stomach and chest were bad. "They say that by this practice he was able to endure various maladies."⁶⁵

⁵⁸ Note Irenaeus' mention of hellebore for purging the insane (*Heresies* 2.30.4).

⁵⁹ Compare Pliny, *Natural History* 25.48–60. He says that hellebore cures epilepsy, vertigo, melancholia, insanity, and many other ailments (60).

⁶⁰ Pliny, *Natural History* 25.51–52 (cf. Aulus Gellius, *Attic Nights* 17.15); generally, 25.48–61.

⁶¹ Lucian, *True Stories* 2.18.

⁶² Epiphanius, *Heresies* (64.1.8; cf. P. Nautin, *Origène: Sa vie et son oeuvre* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1977), 211–12).

⁶³ Galen, *On Antidotes* 1.1 (14.3–5 ed. Kühn et al.).

⁶⁴ Lucian, *Ignorant Book Collector* 23. See E. C. Witke, "Marcus Aurelius and Mandragora," *Classical Philology* 60 (1965): 23–24. According to Caelius Aurelianus, *Acute Diseases* 2.20 (pp. 132–33 Drabkin; 142–43 Bendz), "those who drink mandragora or henbane are plunged into a stertorous sleeplike stupor."

⁶⁵ Dio Cassius 72 (71). 6.4 (LCL Dio 9.22–23).

1.9. *Galen after Galen*

Several of the *Medical Definitions* ascribed to Galen concern mental ailments.⁶⁶ “Ἐκτασις is a brief madness (*mania*)” (462, line 11); ἔκπληξις is a derangement of the understanding because of some sudden external disturbance” (462, lines 12–13); ἐνθουσιασμός is the derangement that results from incense or music in temples (462, lines 14–16).

A little compilation *On Melancholia* (19.699–720 ed. Kühn et al.) is entitled *De melancholia ex Galeno Rufo Posidonio et Marcello Sicamii Aetii Libellus*. The other authors excerpted include Rufus of Ephesus (time of Trajan), Marcellus of Side (in Pamphylia, first half of the second century C.E.). “At its base lies the division of melancholia into three forms as set forth by Galen.”⁶⁷ The treatise contains nothing especially novel but provides several interesting details. Thus we learn of a hypochondriac who believed he had no head—until he was told to wear a lead cap. And some of the comments resemble New Testament passages. For instance, some melancholics suppose that demons have been set on them by hostile spells, and many prefer to live in dark places, tombs, and wilderness, though some fear water.⁶⁸ (With this we may compare the Gerasene demoniac of Mark 5:5.)

1.10. *Sextus Empiricus*

This physician and devotee of Scepticism discusses hallucinations with reference to literature and Greek medical analysis. Thus he deals with the impression of Electra “experienced by Orestes in his mania.” His impression was true in regard to the existing object Electra but false in regard to a Fury; “for there was no Fury.” And, he goes on, “of true presentations some are apprehensive, others not—not apprehensive being those which are experienced by persons in a morbid condition; for countless sufferers from frenzy and melancholia receive a presentation which though true is not apprehensive but occurs externally and fortuitously.”⁶⁹

⁶⁶ *Definitions* (19.346–462 ed. Kühn et al.).

⁶⁷ J. L. Heiberg, *Geisteskrankheiten im klassischen Altertum* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1927) 35.

⁶⁸ *On Melancholia* 3 (19.701–2 ed. Kühn et al.).

⁶⁹ *Against Professors* 7.244–45, 247.

2. *Religious Cures of Mental Illness*

The most famous healing shrine of antiquity was at Epidaurus in the Peloponnese, where patients would sleep and receive instructions from the god Asclepius. Inscriptions from the fourth century B.C.E. tell how healings took place not only for physical ailments but also for psychosomatic disorders.⁷⁰ Few cases concern mental illness, however, even borderline psychosomatic ones. Why was this? Are we to assume that in the fourth century mental illness was unusual or not easily identified? Was it rare among prospective patients with enough money to visit Epidaurus? Or was it cured without enough publicity to please the priests?

In any event, the *Sacred Tales* of the rhetorician Aelius Aristides (2nd century C.E.)⁷¹ tell how Asclepius would appear in his dreams and give counsel about his ailments, all of which in his own view were physical. He spent some years at Pergamum, where the healing shrine of Asclepius had been founded from Epidaurus. Generally, he emphasizes the 'paradoxical' character of the god's prescriptions, and the commands he lists are not often close to the advice of physicians in our medical manuals.⁷² Indeed, when a physician told him not to let his blood and undermine his body, he replied (or so he says) that he did not have the authority to do one thing or the other. "While the god commanded the letting of my blood, I would obey whether willing or not, or rather never unwillingly. Still I did not ignore Satyrus' prescription [a light plaster], but took and kept it." Later on when he followed Satyrus' prescription there were bad side effects.⁷³ Again, Aristides took his theriac with a meal, rather than on an empty stomach as physicians prescribed, for the god had ordered him to do this.⁷⁴ (He praises two of his own physicians who

⁷⁰ W. Dittenberger, *Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum* 3 (3rd ed., Leipzig: Hirzel, 1920), nos. 1168–70; R. Herzog, *Die Wunderheilungen von Epidaurus* (Philologus Supplementband 22.3, 1931): mute (unable to speak, A5, C44), blind (unable to see, A18, C 65, D69 [one eye]), or suffering from dropsy (B21, C49) or epilepsy (C62 with commentary, 109–11).

⁷¹ B. Keil, *Aelii Aristidis quae supersunt omnia* 2 (Berlin: Weidmann, 1898), *Orations* xlvii–lii; C. A. Behr, *Aelius Aristides and the Sacred Tales* (Amsterdam: Hakkert, 1968).

⁷² Aristides, *Oration* 42.8 (Behr, 248–49; Keil, 336).

⁷³ *Ibid.* 49.8–11 (Behr, 309–10; Keil, 415–16). On incompetent physicians, see Behr, 169.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.* 49.27 (Behr, 313; Keil, 420).

agreed with Asclepius.)⁷⁵ Mental illness is not a category Aristides uses, even though he seems fairly unbalanced himself.⁷⁶

In the years 145–46, “Asclepius the Savior commanded us to spend time on songs and lyric verse, and to relax and maintain a chorus of boys. . . . The children sang my songs. And whenever I happened to choke, if my throat was suddenly constricted, or my stomach became disordered, or whenever I had some other troublesome attack, the doctor Theodotus, being in attendance and remembering my dreams, used to order the boys to sing some of my lyric verse. And while they were singing, there arose unnoticed a feeling of comfort, and sometimes everything that pained me went completely away.”⁷⁷ In the winter of 146, Aristides related some dreams to the same physician, sympathetic to the cult of Asclepius,⁷⁸ but the doctor refused to act on them because of ‘the excessive weakness of [Aristides’] body.’ They then summoned the temple wardens, one of whom had dreamed in agreement with the god.⁷⁹ Medical doubt, which gradually diminished, could not conquer divine belief.

Twenty years later in February 166, another doctor, Porphyrio, was preparing to help the dreaming patient, “but when he heard the dreams, being a sensible man, he also yielded to the god. And we recognized the true and proper doctor for us, and we did what he commanded. My night was wholly endurable and everything was without pain.”⁸⁰ Aristides had little use for the uncertainties of Greek medicine. He was well aware that physicians could disagree. When he developed a tumor in 148, physicians proposed various cures: “some said surgery, some said cauterization by drug, or that an infection would arise and I must surely die.” The god forbade any operation. Finally, both Aristides and his foster-father dreamed that the god told them to apply “a certain drug, whose particulars I do not remember, except that it contained salt” (!). When Aristides had this applied, “most of the growth quickly disappeared, and at dawn my friends were present, happy and incredulous. From here on, the doctors stopped their criticisms, expressed extraordinary admiration for

⁷⁵ Behr, 169–70.

⁷⁶ See G. Michenaud – J. Dierkens, *Les rêves dans les “Discours sacrés” d’Aelius Aristide* (Université de Mons, 1972).

⁷⁷ Aristides, *Or.* 50.38 (Behr, 325; Keil, 435).

⁷⁸ Behr, 44.

⁷⁹ Aristides, *Or.* 48.34–35 (Behr, 298; Keil, 402).

⁸⁰ *Ibid.* 47.57 (Behr, 287; Keil, 389–90).

the providence of the god in each particular, and said it was some other greater disease, which he secretly cured.”⁸¹ Aristides’ blithe disregard of the drug he used does not inspire confidence in his report.

Moving closer to the New Testament, we find that by the first century C.E. exorcism had been accepted and highly valued among Hellenistic Jews, and the Jewish author Josephus traces it back the venerated Jewish king Solomon. “God granted him knowledge of the art used against demons for the benefit and healing of men, and he composed incantations by which illnesses are relieved, and left forms of exorcisms with which those possessed by demons drive them out so that they never return.” Josephus also tells how, much later, his own contemporary Eleazar “in the presence of Vespasian, his sons, tribunes and a large number of other soldiers” freed men from demons. “He put to the nose of the possessed man a ring which had under its seal one of the roots prescribed by Solomon; then, as the man smelled it, drew the demon out through his nostrils. When the man immediately fell down, he adjured the demon never to come back into him, speaking Solomon’s name and reciting the incantations he had composed.” To prove his point, Eleazar ordered the demon to overturn a nearby bowl of water. This proved “Solomon’s understanding and wisdom.”⁸² Should this procedure be called ‘Jewish’ or, for that matter, ‘Hellenistic’? Who knows what Vespasian and the other witnesses could have thought of the results?⁸³

3. *Medicine in the New Testament*

In the New Testament itself, physicians and medical arts are not mentioned, much less given names, outside Col 4:14, where a certain Luke is called ‘the beloved physician,’ and the synoptic gospels; and even in these gospels there are few references to them. According to Mark 2:17 (Matt 9:12; Luke 5:31) Jesus told the Pharisees that “those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick.” He was comparing his own work among sinners to that

⁸¹ *Ibid.* 47.62–63, 66–68 (Behr, 288–89; Keil, 391–92).

⁸² Josephus, *Antiquities* 8.45–49.

⁸³ Suetonius (*Vespasian* 23.4) comments that “not even in fear and the immediate peril of death did he abstain from joking.” Would a bowl of water have impressed him?

of a physician. Ignatius of Antioch picks up the comparison but obscurely calls Jesus 'physician fleshly and spiritual,' possibly meaning 'physician of body and soul.'⁸⁴ In some gospels we also hear of a woman who "suffered much from many physicians and spent all her money and was no better, but rather worse" (Mark 5:26; cf. Luke 8:43 in some MSS). Luke cites a proverbial but critical expression, "Physician, heal yourself" (Luke 4:23).

While all four gospels quote Jesus' use of another proverb about prophets, "A prophet is not without honor except in his own town,"⁸⁵ only the apocryphal *Gospel of Thomas* adds the supposedly parallel thought that "a physician does not heal those who know him."⁸⁶

4. *Mental Illness in the New Testament*

When we look in the New Testament for discussions of mental illness in particular, the exorcisms performed by Jesus and the apostles jump conspicuously to the fore. But before we turn to them we should first look at some explicit references to madness itself.

4.1. *Tongues and Madness*

When Paul (as Luke depicts him) describes his conversion to the Roman governor Festus, he tells about seeing a bright light and falling to the ground with others and hearing a mysterious voice speaking Hebrew. Festus suggests that Paul suffers from mania and that it is due to his excessive learning (Acts 26:24). Indeed, according to Caelius Aurelianus "intense straining of the senses and the mind in study" was a cause of mania.⁸⁷ In 1 Cor 14:14–20, however, Paul himself discusses mind and intelligence as contrasted with talking in 'tongues' and suggests that such talking involves 'speaking to the air' (14:9). Then he considers the effect of such speech on visitors to the community. "If all speak in tongues, will they not say that you are crazy?"

⁸⁴ Ignatius, *Ephesians* 7.2.

⁸⁵ Mark 6:4, Matt 13:57, Luke 4:24, John 4:44.

⁸⁶ A. Guillaumont et al., *The Gospel According to Thomas* (Leiden: Brill, 1959), Logion 31. Note the addition in Logion 32: "A city built on a high mountain and fortified cannot fall; nor can it (ever) be hidden." This too looks like exegesis by (erroneous) paraphrase.

⁸⁷ Caelius Aurelianus, *Chronic Diseases* 1.147 (Drabkin, 536–37; Bendz, 515).

(14:23). Like Festus' mention of mania, Paul's references to mind and intelligence point to a standard commonly accepted by Christians and non-Christians alike. His notion of mania is universal, not unique to his religious outlook. But this is all Paul says of mental illness.

As for talking in 'tongues,' the anti-Christian author Celsus describes the prophets of Phoenicia and Palestine in the second century. He says that after making predictions of the imminent end of the world, they would "go on to add incomprehensible, incoherent, and utterly obscure utterances, the meaning of which no intelligent person could discover, for they are meaningless and nonsensical, and give a chance for any fool or sorcerer to take the world in whatever sense he likes."⁸⁸ Are these utterances really the same as glossolalia? Lietzmann so regards them, and he adds further parallels from (1) Irenaeus' account of Marcus the magician and his female accomplice or victim, who utters nonsense under his inspiration; and (2) the nonsense syllables of the Greek magical papyri.⁸⁹ This conclusion is not absolutely sure, however. The talkers might be Montanists, for example.

The situation becomes more complex if we compare the story of Pentecost in the book of Acts. There we find tongues as of fire (2:1-3), while in 2:4-11 other 'tongues' are foreign languages. In Acts 2:13-15 the question is raised whether glossolalists are drunk or not.⁹⁰ Does a more sober account appear in the summary of Acts 4:31, in which the place was shaken, the people were filled with the Holy Spirit, and all spoke the word of God with boldness? We may also compare Acts 10:44-46: the Holy Spirit falls on believers, and even gentiles speak in tongues and magnify God.

4.2. *Demons and Madness in the Synoptic Gospels*

The synoptic gospels contain many examples of mental illnesses (as Greco-Roman physicians viewed them) and their cure. Matthew 4:24 lists patients constrained by various diseases and torments, including 'the demonized, the moon-struck, and paralytics.' Matthew 12:43-45 = Luke 11:24-26 tells how an unclean spirit, once driven

⁸⁸ Origen, *Against Celsus* 7.9.

⁸⁹ H. Lietzmann (rev. W. G. Kümmel), *An die Korinther* (4th ed.; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1949), 68-69.

⁹⁰ For drunkenness as akin to madness, cf. *Odyssey* 18.406; 21.298; Lucian *Dialogues of the Gods* 18 (22).2 'maddened by drink'; cf. *Dialogues of the Gods* 3.1.

out, will first seek refreshment in waterless places and then return with seven others more wicked than itself. It should be noted that, though an unclean spirit is mentioned in Zechariah 13:2 and in rabbinic literature, the term appears nowhere else in the Old Testament, nor have we seen it in the medical writers surveyed above.

4.3. *Unclean Spirits in Luke*

Luke likewise refers to unclean spirits and emphasizes the symptoms of possession by them. Thus in Luke 9:39, “a spirit seizes a boy and he suddenly cries out; it convulses him till he foams, and shatters him, and will hardly leave him.” Again, “there was a woman who had had a ‘spirit of weakness’ for eighteen years; she was bent over and could not fully straighten herself.⁹¹ And when Jesus saw her [on the Sabbath] he called her and said to her, ‘Woman, you are freed from your weakness.’ And he laid his hands on her and immediately she was made straight and she praised God” (13:11–13). Again, “one Sabbath . . . there was a man before him who had dropsy (ὕδρωπικός).⁹² He took him and healed him and let him go” (Luke 14:1–4). People brought “the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits” to the earliest Christians of Jerusalem, “and they were all healed” (Acts 5:16).

4.4. *Unclean Spirits in Mark*

The strongest emphasis on ‘unclean spirits’ and driving them out appears in the Gospel of Mark,⁹³ in which the term occurs eleven times, as against only twice in Matthew,⁹⁴ five times in Luke, and twice in Acts.⁹⁵

⁹¹ Since she was bound by Satan for eighteen years (13:16), a demonic spirit was the cause of the weakness, perhaps to be classified as paralysis.

⁹² Incurable, as well as hard to diagnose, according to Aretaeus, *Chronic Diseases* 4.1.12 (Hude, 64, line 29). Caelius Aurelianus, *Chronic Diseases* 3.96–155 (Drabkin, 772–813) calls it very hard to cure.

⁹³ F. Hauck, “ἀκάθαρτος, ἀκαθαρσία,” R. Kittel, *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament* III (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1938), 430–32. R. Pesch, *Der Markusevangelium* I (Freiburg: Herder, 1976), 123; cites J. H. Waszink, “Besessenheit,” *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum* II, 184: “In most cases it is a question of epilepsy, implied by the possessed one’s often being thrown to the ground by demons, for example, Justin, *Apology* 1.18.4.”

⁹⁴ Matt 10:1 (from Mark 6:7); 12:43 (par. 11:24).

⁹⁵ Luke 4:36 (from Mark 1:27); 6:18 (from Mark 3:11); 8:29 (from Mark 5:8); 9:42 (from Mark 9:25); 11:24 (= Matt 12:43); Acts 5:16; 8:7 (summaries).

The first cure Mark describes is of a man with an unclean spirit, which Jesus commands, "Be muzzled and come out of him." The unclean spirit tears him and with a loud cry comes out (1:23–26).⁹⁶

The next cure, of Peter's mother-in-law, is simply for fever (1:29–31). A summary of the whole section, however, mentions "all who were sick and demonized" and says that Jesus "healed many who were sick with various diseases and cast out many demons" (1:32–34). Another summary indicates that he "preached in their synagogues in all Galilee and cast out demons" (1:39).

Mark 1:40–45 describes the healing of a leper, while 2:1–12 tells of healing a paralytic by telling him, "Your sins are forgiven," and adding, "Take up your bed and go to your house." No demons are involved, any more than in 3:1–5, the healing of a man with a withered hand.

On the other hand, another summary indicates that after Jesus withdraws to the lake of Galilee, where crowds follow him, he heals many who touch him. 'Unclean spirits' fall before him and cry out, "You are the holy one of God" (3:7–12). A little later he empowers the Twelve to 'cast out demons' (3:15). Matthew 10:1 interprets this (and 6:7) as 'cast out unclean spirits,' and adds 'heal every disease and ailment.'

We soon hear of psychic ailments again, in what looks like another Marcan summary (3:21), when people who came out to seize Jesus said, 'He is deranged ἐξέστη).'⁹⁷ But who are "those who came out to seize him"? The passage is (intentionally?) unclear.

Next we hear of the accusation that "by the prince of demons he casts out demons" (3:22), and in another summary (3:30) this becomes the charge that "they said, 'He has an unclean spirit.'"

In Mark 5:1–20 we find the detailed symptoms of a Gadarene possessed by demons. "There met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, who lived among the tombs; and no one could bind him any more, even with a chain; for though he had often

⁹⁶ Note the similar structure of Mark 4:39, in which Jesus "rebuked the wind and said, 'Peace, be still,' to the sea." Thereupon "the wind ceased and there was a great calm."

⁹⁷ For the sense cf. Aristotle, *History of Animals* 6.22, 579a12, 'deranged and mad,' of a mare which scents ἵππομανές; cf. Bauer-Arndt-Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (2nd edition; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), 276.

been bound with fetters and chains, he wrenched apart the chain and broke the fetters in pieces. No one had the strength to subdue him.⁹⁸ Night and day he constantly cried out and bruised himself with stones among the tombs and on the mountains.” He was the prey of unclean spirits, which identified themselves by saying, “Legion is my name, for we are many.” At their request Jesus allows them to enter into two thousand equally unclean swine, which “rushed down the steep bank to the sea, and were drowned in the sea.”⁹⁹ Afterwards the demoniac was sitting beside Jesus, clothed and sane (σωφρονῶν, 5:15).

Mark 5:22–24 begins the story of Jairus’ daughter, to be continued in verses 35–43. Her ailment was not caused by demons, nor was that of the woman with a twelve-year hemorrhage in the interwoven story (25–34). Indeed, she was the woman who had “suffered many things from many physicians, had spent all her money, and was no better but rather worse” (verse 26). Caelius Aurelianus, following Soranus, holds that “chronic cases of bleeding are more difficult to treat successfully than those of recent origin.” Furthermore, the remedies he proposes suggest a trial-and-error approach.¹⁰⁰

In Mark 6:7 Jesus gives power over unclean spirits (cf. Matt 10:1; Luke 9:1 ‘over all the demons’) to the disciples, who thereupon “cast out many demons and anointed with oil many that were sick and healed them” (6:13).

An unclean spirit or demon is ejected from the daughter of a Syro-Phoenician woman in Mark 7:25–30 (cf. Matt 15:22, ‘is badly demonized’), and a deaf-mute is healed in Mark 7:32–35.

The last of Mark’s comments on healings (7:37) discusses simply the miraculous healings, not the demons: “They were exceedingly astonished and said, ‘He has done all things well; he even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak.’”¹⁰¹

⁹⁸ On the importance of fetters, see Celsus 3.18.4, 21.

⁹⁹ Compare Matt 12:43 = Luke 11:24: “when the unclean spirit . . . goes through waterless places seeking rest . . .” Is it seeking water?

¹⁰⁰ *Chronic Diseases* 2.140 (Drabkin, 654–95).

¹⁰¹ Cf. Gen 1:31; also *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta* III 560–61: πάντ’ ἐδ’ ποιεῖν τὸν σόφον. Compare Aretaeus 4.1.12 (Adams, 476; Hude, 64, line 31) (on paralysis): “It is impossible to make all the sick healthy; for a physician would thus be superior to the gods.” Adams compares Hippocrates *Prognostic* (1, p. 6 LCL, translated by W. H. S. Jones: “To restore every patient to health is impossible. To do so would indeed have been better even than forecasting the future.”

In Mark 8:22–25 Jesus spits on the eyes of a blind man and produces a partial cure; then he touches the eyes and heals them completely. Of course the blindness is not necessarily due to a mental disease.

The last mental ailment appears in Mark 9:14–27 ('dumb spirit' 9:17 = 'dumb and deaf spirit' 9:25) in a boy identified as an epileptic in Matt 17:15. Whenever the dumb spirit seizes the boy, it dashes him down; he foams and grinds his teeth and becomes rigid (Mark 9:18). It has often cast him into the fire and into the water, to destroy him (9:22). Jesus rebuked the 'dumb and deaf spirit' (9:25). After crying out and convulsing him terribly, it came out, and the boy was like a corpse (9:26). Lucian provides an excellent parallel to the story when he ascribes the cure of an epileptic to a 'Syrian from Palestine.' This 'sophist' (perhaps Jesus?) takes many "who fall down in moonlight and roll their eyes and fill their mouths with foam; he raises them up and sends them away with sound minds, delivering them from peril at a great price." He asks demons whence they came into the body. The patient is silent but the demon answers, either in Greek or in his own barbarous language, "telling how and whence he entered the man; whereupon, by adjuring and threatening the demon the sophist drives him out." Lucian claims that he "actually saw one coming out, black and smoky in color." Philostratus too tells of mental illness cured as demonic possession. There was a young man who unawares was possessed. "He would laugh when no one else did, then change to weeping for no reason, and talk and sing to himself. Most people thought it was his boisterous youth that led him to these excesses, but he was really the mouthpiece of a demon, though he seemed to be drunk. When Apollonius looked at him, the demon in him began to emit voices of wrath such as come from people being burned or tortured, and swore that he would leave him alone and never take possession of any man." Apollonius then made the demon prove his departure by a sign; he overturned a nearby statue in the Royal Portico at Athens. The young man, naturally, became a philosopher.¹⁰²

¹⁰² Lucian, *Lover of Lies* 16; Philostratus, *Life of Apollonius* 4.20. R. Bultmann, *Die Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition* (2nd ed.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1931), 247, cites these examples of the 'dreadful or dangerous character' of the ailments, but they are the usual symptoms of epilepsy and mania. His comment does refer to the hallucinations he cites from *Acts of Thomas* 64 (*Acta Apostolorum Apocrypha*, edited by R. A. Lipsius and M. Bonnet [Leipzig: Mendelssohn, 1903], 181, 6–11).

Thus Mark also tells of ailments caused by demons as well as those not so caused. The latter include a paralytic (2:3–12), a man with a withered hand (3:1–5), various healings (5:21–43), a man deaf and mute (7:32–35), mute (7:37), a blind man (8:22–25), another blind man, Bartimaeus (10:46–52 = two blind men, Matt 9:27–31 = Matt 20:30–34).

4.5. *Demons and Madness in John*

The Gospel of John, in striking contrast to the Synoptics, contains no exorcisms or spirits called unclean, nor demons in the plural, but opponents of Jesus accuse him of having a demon because he believes they seek to kill him (7:20, cf. 8:48). Again, they claim that he has a demon and is crazy. Others say that a demon cannot open the eyes of the blind (10:20–21).¹⁰³ Jesus himself heals an official's dying son at Capernaum (4:46–54) as well as a man at Jerusalem lame for thirty-eight years (5:2–15). The disciples ask Jesus whether the sin of a man born blind or of his parents caused his blindness, and he replies that it was due to neither. It was "that the works of God might be made manifest in him" (9:2–3). He then spits on the ground, anoints the man's eyes with the mud, and sends him to wash in the pool of Siloam (9:6–41).¹⁰⁴ He raises Lazarus from the dead four days after death (11:1–44). Only John describes such a raising, though two similar cases appear in Luke: the raising of a widow's son at Nain (7:11–15), and of Jairus' daughter (8:41–42, 49–55).

5. *Early Christians on Medicine*¹⁰⁵

Among the Apostolic Fathers, Ignatius of Antioch touches on medical matters, speaking of the Eucharist as 'a drug of immortality, antidote to dying' and mentioning a contrasted 'deadly drug, imbibed in honey-wine.'¹⁰⁶ Galen refers to the 'antidote of Mithridates against

¹⁰³ John the Baptist has a demon (Matt 11:18; Luke 7:33).

¹⁰⁴ On this miracle see F. Bisconti in *Encyclopedia of the Early Church* (1992), 370–71.

¹⁰⁵ The best general introduction to our topic remains A. Harnack, *Medicinisches aus der ältesten Kirchengeschichte*, Texte und Untersuchungen 8.4 (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1892).

¹⁰⁶ Ignatius, *Ephesians* 20.2; *Trallians* 6.2.

deadly drugs,' called 'immortality.'¹⁰⁷ The Christian Papias too mentions a medical detail, referring to the surgical *speculum* (διόπτρα) which could not reveal the diseased eyes of the traitor Judas.¹⁰⁸

A few references to physicians occur in the apologists Aristides, Justin, and Tatian.¹⁰⁹ More significant discussions appear in Theophilus of Antioch. The first is a comparison between the soul's sickness and cataracts. "Deliver yourself to the physician and he will prick the eyes of your soul and heart."¹¹⁰ The second discusses recovery from severe illness. "Perhaps you once fell ill and lost flesh, strength, and form; but when you obtained mercy and healing from God you recovered your body, form, and strength. Just as you did not know where your flesh went when it vanished, so you did not know whence it originated when it came back. But you will say, 'From solids and liquids converted into blood.' Certainly! But this too is the work of the God who formed them in this way, not of anyone else."¹¹¹ But none of these authors refers to mental illness in particular.

Irenaeus knows a bit more about physicians than most earlier Christians do. Medicine is an important art (2.32.2), maintained by a physician against the whims of his patient (3.5.2). We Christians desire to help the Valentinians as if we were physicians, by applying a caustic drug of the kind that eats away their inappropriate and superfluous flesh (3.25.7). This would obviously be for their good. (Not necessarily so, according to Caelius Aurelianus).¹¹²

None of these references suggests that Christians held a peculiar view of medicine. Indeed, it appears simply as part of their general environment.

¹⁰⁷ Galen, *Antidotes* 2.8 (14.148 ed. Kühn et al.). Emperors were customarily hoarded antidotes for poisons. When Galen was preparing the antidote called theriac for Marcus Aurelius, he found that the ingredient cinnamon in the stores of his three predecessors had lost its strength (*Antidotes* 1.13, 14.64–65, ed. Kühn et al.).

¹⁰⁸ F. X. Funk – K. Bihlmeyer, *Die apostolischen Väter* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1956), 136, lines 30–31 (fragment 3).

¹⁰⁹ Aristides 10.5 (Asclepius a physician); Justin, *Apology* 1.29.2 (physicians involved with the voluntary castration of a young Christian at Alexandria), *Dialogue* 3.5 (the art of medicine); Tatian 3.1 (and death of Heraclitus).

¹¹⁰ "An operation of pricking (Greek παρακέντησις) performed on an eye for the purpose of removing a chronic cataract" (Caelius Aurelianus, *Chronic Diseases* 1.170 [Drabkin, 552–53]; cf. Celsus 7.7.13–14). For the term see also Galen, *Use of the Parts of the Body* 10.1 and 4 (pp. 55, 22; 70, 24 ed. Helmreich).

¹¹¹ *To Autolytus* 1.7 and 1.13. On nutrition see Galen, *On the Natural Faculties* 1.8–13 (LCL 71, translated by A. J. Brock).

¹¹² Caelius Aurelianus, *Acute Diseases* 2.221–22 (Drabkin, 282–89).

6. *Early Christians on Mental Illness*

Early Christian authors address the topic of mental illness in various contexts and for different purposes. For instance, when Ignatius of Antioch describes the ‘ecstasy’ of the bishop, he may have something in mind such as is described in the prophetic opening of the Book of Revelation (Rev 1:10: “I was in the Spirit [or ‘a spirit’] on the Lord’s Day and I heard behind me a loud voice, saying, ‘What you see, write in a book’”). Ignatius says that Spirit spoke through him and he cried out ‘in a loud voice, God’s voice,’ and commanded loyalty to the bishop, and the presbytery and deacons. He had no previous knowledge of the situation, he insists, but the Spirit was preaching.¹¹³

In Asia Minor at a later date a neophyte named Montanus came to be possessed, in an ecstatic trance and spirit-inspired, speaking strangely, but his critics claimed he was inspired by demons. Later the devil “raised up two more women and filled them with the bastard spirit so that they spoke madly and improperly and strangely, like Montanus.”¹¹⁴ The general question arose as to whether prophets under the old covenant or the new could speak ‘in ecstasy.’ Opponents of the Montanists held that their ecstasy began with ignorance and turned into ‘involuntary mania.’¹¹⁵ Thus Origen speaks of those who are mindless and insane, “like those who according to the Gospel were cured by the Savior.” He seeks to distinguish from this the inspiration of the true Spirit, which produces no disturbance or mental alienation.¹¹⁶

6.1. *Tatian*

Tatian, wrongly called an apologist, was basically a rather pedantic critic of the classical culture he had studied. He wrote late in the reign of Marcus Aurelius, perhaps in Syria, and insisted that Christians had to use exorcisms rather than drugs. “There are diseases and disorders of the matter within us; the demons assign to themselves the

¹¹³ Ignatius, *Philadelphians* 7.1–2.

¹¹⁴ Eusebius, *Church History* 5.16.7, 9, 14 (LCL 153, p. 477, translated by Kirsopp Lake).

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.* 5.17.1, 2.

¹¹⁶ Origen, *On First Principles* 3.3.4. On true and false spirits, Clement, *Miscellanies* 1.85.3; Hermas, *Mandates* 11.3.

causes of these when they occur, following sickness when it strikes. Sometimes they shake the body's system with a fit of their own madness and then struck by a word of God's power they go away in fear, and the sick man is healed. . . . The varieties of roots and the applications of sinews and bones are not efficacious in themselves, but are the elemental matter of the wickedness of the demons. . . . How can it be right to ascribe to matter and not to God the help given to madmen?" The demons "turn men away from religion and make them rely on herbs and roots."¹¹⁷ Tatian denounces the use of such roots and herbs and claims that "if there is poison in plants, this has happened because of our sinfulness."¹¹⁸ When he goes on to say, "Even if you are cured by drugs," he immediately adds that "I grant you this [only] by way of concession (κατὰ συγγνώμην)."¹¹⁹

Tatian also ridicules pagans who like Plato associated 'manic' with 'mantic.' "Some woman drinks water and goes crazy and goes manic from incense, and you say that such a one is mantic."¹²⁰ Apparently he refers to the priestess of the oracle at Delphi, as Marcovich's parallels suggest.¹²¹ He is opposed to 'sympathetic' and 'antipathetic' magic as well. A 'pathic' disease is not destroyed through antipathy, nor is a manic person cured by the attachment of leather amulets.¹²²

He does accept some ordinary explanations of disease, claiming that above this heaven are better worlds which have none of the changes of season that produce various diseases.¹²³ Caelius Aurelianus, for example, identified some ailments as seasonal.¹²⁴ In this whole section Tatian "does not avoid a certain confusion and a rather considerable obscurity,"¹²⁵ largely because of his inconsistent view of the material world.

¹¹⁷ Tatian, *Oration* 16.8, lines 25–30; 17.4, lines 20–23; 17.5, lines 27–30. Translations aided by M. Whitaker, *Tatian Oratio ad Graecos* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1982), and A. Puech, *Recherches sur le Discours aux Grecs de Tatien* (Paris: Alcan, 1903).

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.* 19.10, line 35.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.* 20.1, line 1.

¹²⁰ For the relation between manic and mantic, see Plato, *Phaedrus* 244–45.

¹²¹ Tatian, *Oration* 19.6, line 2; Marcovich sites parallels especially from Pausanias and Lucian. See Miroslav Marcovich, ed., *Tatiani Oratio ad Graecos, Theophili Antiocheni Ad Autolyicum* (Patristische Texte und Studien 43–44; Berlin; New York: W. De Gruyter, 1995).

¹²² *Ibid.* 17.3, line 11.

¹²³ *Ibid.* 20.4, line 12.

¹²⁴ *Acute Diseases* 2.12 (Drabkin, 126–29) (lethargy); 3.52 (Drabkin, 330–33) (apoplexy); *Chronic Diseases* 2.1 (Drabkin, 564–65) (paralysis).

¹²⁵ Puech, 46.

Tatian has no sympathy with the mentally ill, and criticizes actors who play the part of insane persons. "Of what use to me is the actor in Euripides, Alcmaeon, who goes mad and announces the killing of his mother?"¹²⁶ He does not even keep his own form but goes around with mouth agape, carrying a sword. . . ."¹²⁷ But critics had already denounced the emperor Nero for playing such roles. Dio Cassius notes earlier reports that Nero's roles included such famous mad characters as Oedipus, Thyestes, Heracles, Alcmeon, and Orestes.¹²⁸

6.2. *Minucius Felix*

There is only a brief allusion to epilepsy in this bland apologetic author. Obviously he is critical of the way "Jupiter Latiaris . . . taught . . . the healing of epilepsy with human blood, a cure worse than the disease."¹²⁹

6.3. *Irenaeus*

Irenaeus mentions one specific case of what he claims to be madness, stating that the Gnostic magician Marcus drove a woman insane.¹³⁰ He also comments on the immoral 'insanity' of the Carpocratians, but his examples of the Gnostics' madness occur especially in his second book against heresies, which is devoted to rational arguments. The Gnostics consider themselves higher and better than the Creator and think they can count even the sparrows (Matt 10:29).¹³¹ When they regard themselves as superior to the Creator, they need a huge dose of hellebore to purge their stupidity. If superiority is proved by works, they have nothing to show and are insane with extreme and incurable insanity. Indeed, they say nothing sane.¹³²

¹²⁶ Euripides, frag. 68 (ed. Nauck); Apollodorus 3.7.5.

¹²⁷ Tatian, *Oration* 24.1, line 1.

¹²⁸ Dio Cassius 62.9.4.

¹²⁹ Minucius Felix, *Octavius* 30.5; cf. Celsus 3.23.7 ('from the cut throat of a gladiator'; Celsus calls it a 'wretched aid'); Pliny, *Natural History* 28.4. Cf. Aretaeus, as cited above.

¹³⁰ Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 1.13.2 (*in insaniam mittens, ἐξοιστρήσας*).

¹³¹ *Ibid.* 1.25.4; 2.25.4; 2.26.2.

¹³² *Ibid.* 2.30.4–6.

6.4. *Origen*

In Origen's treatise *On First Principles*, he sometimes speaks of medical teaching and practice and uses it as a general example. "There are many who share in the teaching and art of medicine; yet are we to suppose that all who share in medicine have some material substance called medicine placed before them from which they take away little particles and so obtain a share of it?"¹³³ The implication of this critique is hardly conclusive. Origen is not fully at ease with medicine, or any 'practical art.' His theory-centered list of the arts includes poetry, grammar, rhetoric, geometry, music, and only tentatively 'perhaps also medicine.'¹³⁴

Despite this general caution, Origen thought Christians could cure seemingly incurable mental diseases. "We have seen many persons released from difficult symptoms and derangements and madresses and thousands of other ailments which neither men nor demons cured."¹³⁵ However, Origen questions the efficacy of rapid cures.

Even though physicians may be able to heal a man quickly, yet they act in a contrary way whenever they suspect the existence of a hidden poison in the body. They do this because they wish to heal the patient more surely, considering it better to let him remain in his fever and sickness for a long time in order that he may regain permanent health, rather than appear to restore him quickly to strength and afterwards to see him relapse and this quicker cure prove only temporary.¹³⁶

This statement raises implicit questions about sudden miraculous cures, although of course not all cures are gradual.

Origen discusses in detail only one healing miracle with a more or less technical name in the New Testament. A boy who turns out to have an unclean spirit (Mark 9:25, Luke 9:42) is called 'moon-struck' (σεληνιάζεται, Matt 17:15; hence the Latin *lunaticus* and our 'lunatic.'). The term appears in various Greek authors¹³⁷ and seems to refer to epilepsy. Origen gives competing diagnoses, as follows:

¹³³ Origen, *On First Principles* 1.1.3. [What translation is being quoted?]

¹³⁴ *Ibid.* 1.8.3; cf. *Commentary on John* 28.13 (more practical medicine and architecture).

¹³⁵ Origen, *Against Celsus* 3.24.

¹³⁶ Origen, *On First Principles* 3.1.13. Rufinus explains: "allow the malignant humor to flow for a while" and let the infected matter out.

¹³⁷ For example, Vettius Valens 2.11 (p. 127, 6.30 ed. Kroll); Origen, *Jeremiah Homilies* 12.12; *Commentary on Matthew* 13.6; and Alexander of Tralles 1.15 (on epilepsy).

physicians suppose that there was no unclean spirit and give a physical explanation;¹³⁸ they say that the moist elements in his head were moved by some συμπάθεια with the light of the moon, which has a moist nature. But we . . . believe in accordance with the gospel that this disease came from an unclean spirit.¹³⁹

But his explanation does not end there, for the multiple cures available require some explanation:

Those who are accustomed, in the manner of the Egyptian magicians, to profess to cure this, appear sometimes to succeed. Perhaps, in order to slander what God has created, this unclean spirit observes certain phases of the moon and so operates that on the observation that men suffer at such a phase of the moon, the cause of this may be thought to be not this demon but the great luminary in heaven. . . . It is clear that those who suffer from what is called epilepsy sometimes fall into the water. It is more unusual that that they sometimes fall into the fire, though it happens. The disease is hard to cure.¹⁴⁰

Origen also took up questions of mental health in response to charges raised by the Platonist Celsus (writing in the guise of a Jewish critic of Christianity) about the chief witness to Jesus' resurrection. Celsus claimed that

while he [Jesus] was alive he did not help himself, but after death he rose again and showed the marks of his punishment and how his hands had been pierced. But who saw this? A crazed woman,¹⁴¹ as you say, and perhaps some other one¹⁴² of those who were deluded by the same sorcery, who either dreamt in a certain state of mind and through wishful thinking had a hallucination due to some mistaken notion (an experience which has happened to thousands), or, which is more likely, wanted to impress the others by telling this fantastic tale, and so by this cock-and-bull fable to provide a chance for other beggars.

¹³⁸ The term φυσιολογοῦντες was used earlier by the apologists Justin (*Apology* 1.60.1) and Athenagoras (*Embassy* 22.2, 5).

¹³⁹ Origen, *Commentary on Matthew* 13.6 (193, 12 ed. Klostermann and Benz); F. J. Dölger, "Der Einfluss des Origenes auf die Beurteilung der Epilepsie und Mondsucht im christlichen Altertum," *Antike und Christentum* 4 (1934): 95–109; J. H. Waszink, "Epilepsie," *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum* 5:830–31.

¹⁴⁰ Based on the translation by H. Smith, *Ante-Nicene Exegesis of the Gospels* 3 (London: SPCK, 1927), 204–5.

¹⁴¹ H. Chadwick, *Origen Contra Celsum* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953), 109, translates Celsus' γυνή πάροιστρος as 'hysterical female,' but this seems a little too specific. For hysteria cf. ὑστερική πνίξ *passio hystérica*, hysterics, in Soranus *On Women's Ailments* 3.26, Περὶ ὑστερικής πνιγός. See *Against Celsus* 7.9, where Chadwick translates πάροιστρα as 'incoherent' (p. 403). Perhaps φρενιτίζοντες should be 'frenzied,' or possibly 'delirious.'

¹⁴² Chadwick suggests that he has the apostle Peter in mind.

Origen seeks to rebut Celsus' view by recourse to a form of medical diagnosis. He argues that Celsus' view

would not be unreasonable if the visions had occurred by night. But his idea of a vision in the daytime is not convincing when the people were in no way mentally unbalanced and were not suffering from delirium or melancholy. Because Celsus foresaw this objection he said that the woman was hysterical (πάροιστρος; but there is no evidence of this in the scriptural account which was the source on which he drew for his criticism.¹⁴³

6.5. *Evagrius of Pontus*

The ideas of the monastic Evagrius appear at first different from those of Greco-Roman medical authors. A good example appears in his *Chapters on Prayer* c. 106. "We once heard a story about one of the holy men of prayer who was assailed by the spiteful demon. No sooner had he lifted his hands in prayer than the demon transformed itself into a lion, and raising his forelegs up, he sank his claws into either cheek of this athlete of prayer. But this man simply would not yield. He did not lower them until he had completed all his usual prayers."¹⁴⁴

Evagrius, who had inherited existing monastic traditions about the passions, "was the first(?) to classify them into an ordered series of eight types of passionate thoughts."¹⁴⁵ He discusses the eight kinds of evil thoughts (λογισμοί)—gluttony, impurity, avarice, sadness, anger, *acedia*, vainglory, and pride—in chapters 6–39 of his *Praktikos*.¹⁴⁶ With several of them Evagrius associates the kind of details that occur in earlier authors on mental disease. Thus he finds gluttony bringing "concern for his stomach, his liver and spleen, the thought of a long illness, scarcity of the commodities of life and finally of his edematous body and the lack of care by the physicians." Avarice arouses fears of "a lengthy old age, inability to perform manual labor (at some future date), famines that are sure to come, sickness that will visit us, the pinch of poverty, the great shame that comes from accepting the necessities of life from others." Sadness really means

¹⁴³ Origen, *Against Celsus* 2.59–60.

¹⁴⁴ J. E. Bamberger, *Evagrius Ponticus The Praktikos. Chapters on Prayer* (Spencer, MA: Cistercian Publications, 1970), 73.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.* lxviii.

¹⁴⁶ Bamberger, 16–26. My thanks to B. McGinn for referring me to this book.

nostalgia, involving the memory of home and parents. Anger, when transformed into indignation, “stirs up alarming experiences by night. This is succeeded by a general debility of the body, malnutrition with its attendant pallor, and the illusion of being attacked by poisonous wild beasts.” Details about *acedia* suggest that it is basically boredom. Then after vainglory and pride will come anger and sadness, and finally “the greatest of maladies—derangement of mind, associated with wild ravings and hallucinations of whole multitudes of demons in the sky.” The arrangement is different from what Greco-Roman authors provide, but finally the attitude is theirs. A sound mind is essential.

6.6. *Nemesius of Emesa*

The late fourth-century Christian bishop Nemesius of Emesa in Syria revered and constantly used ‘Galen the wonderful physician.’¹⁴⁷ In his treatise *On the Nature of Man* he frequently quotes from him. In a chapter on the faculty of memory, Nemesius first gives attention to the various parts of the brain, and the maladies associated with damage to each.¹⁴⁸ Then he tells a revealing, illustrative story from Galen’s works:

Galen describes such a case¹⁴⁹ of a man suffering from inflammation of the brain who was in a room, with a weaver working there. This man started up and took hold of some glass vessels, and running to a window he demanded of the passers-by whether they would like him to throw down such and such a glass vessel, naming each correctly. When some stopped and said that they would, he first threw the vessels down, one by one, and then asked those who were there if they would like the weaver thrown down. Some of them, taking the whole thing for a joke, said, ‘Yes.’ The man thereupon took and pushed the weaver out, and down he went!¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁷ Nemesius, *Nature of Man* 1.2 (C. F. Matthaei, *Nemesius, de natura hominis, graece et latine* [Halle: Gebauer, 1802] 123, line 6). An English translation is found in William Telfer, *Cyril of Jerusalem and Nemesius of Emesa*, Library of Christian Classics 4 (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1955).

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.* 1.13, “On the Memory” (Telfer, 341ff.; Matthaei, 204, line 14 to 206, line 5).

¹⁴⁹ Galen, *On Affected Places* 4.1 (8.226 ed. Kühn et al.). He says it happened at Rome.

¹⁵⁰ Nemesius, *Nature of Man* 1.13 (Matthaei, 206, line 5 to 207, line 4).

There was no problem with the man's senses; "what was deranged was his mind." In this case, Nemesius was obviously following Galen and "expressing the results of Greek medical science at its most advanced."¹⁵¹

6.7. *Isidore of Seville*

It is appropriate to conclude with the polymath Isidore, bishop of Seville in the early seventh century. His *Etymologies* or *Origins*¹⁵² contains few traces of specifically or uniquely Christian teaching throughout, and the rather brief fourth book deals with medicine in a thoroughly traditional manner. Loss of balance among the four humors causes disease. Phrenesis and lethargy are named among acute ailments, while chronic ailments include scotomia, vertigo, and epilepsy. "Ordinary people call epileptics lunatics because through the phases of the moon they are exposed to the plots of demons."¹⁵³ While Isidore does not endorse their view, he does not join Origen in rejecting it. Mania is so called from the Greek words for insanity or furor, while melancholia comes from 'black bile.'

Conclusion

The emphasis in all this is literary rather than medical, but obviously Isidore and other early Christian authors are in tune with the best traditional medicine of their time. Thus, in dealing with mental illness in the ancient world, there are no clear borders between Christians and their neighbors.

¹⁵¹ So Telfer, 206–207.

¹⁵² Cf. R. M. Grant, *Early Christians and Animals* (London: Routledge, 1999), 112–62.

¹⁵³ *Etymologies* 4.7.6 (W. M. Lindsay, *Isidori Hispalensis episcopi Etymologiarum sive Originum* [2 vols.; Oxford: Clarendon, 1911] 1:169.

CHRIST PROCLAIMING HIS LAW TO THE APOSTLES: THE *TRADITIO LEGIS*-MOTIF IN EARLY CHRISTIAN ART AND LITERATURE

Reidar Hvalvik

1. *Texts and Pictures*

The earliest examples of Christian art, mainly found in the catacombs of Rome, represent well-known figures and narratives from the Old and New Testament, e.g. Noah in the ark, Abraham offering Isaac, Jonah and the fish, Daniel and the lions, the three young boys in the furnace, Susanna, Jesus being baptized, Jesus raising Lazarus, Jesus feeding the multitude, etc.¹ Such motifs are predominant in pre-Constantinian times.

Around the middle of the fourth century new motifs appear.² Some of these are related to biblical texts, e.g. Jesus' nativity, his entrance into Jerusalem, his arrest and trial, while others have little direct association with specific scriptural narratives, e.g. Christ enthroned and Christ among his apostles. While the older biblical themes seem to have had a primarily didactic character, the newer Christian iconography was "designed to emphasize the glory, power, and majesty" of Christianity, says Robin Margaret Jensen.³

Central among the new iconographic themes is the so-called *traditio legis*-motif. This name ("transmission of the law") has since 1858⁴ been used of a group of compositions showing Christ, flanked by Peter and Paul. Christ is standing, holding an open scroll in his left hand; his right hand is raised. Peter, to the left of Christ, normally

¹ For an overview of these motifs, see Graydon F. Snyder, *Ante Pacem: Archaeological Evidence of Church Life Before Constantine* (rev. ed.; Macon: Mercer University Press, 2003), esp. 67–126.

² Cf. Robin Margaret Jensen, *Understanding Early Christian Art* (London: Routledge, 2000), 89 and 97.

³ Jensen, *Understanding Early Christian Art*, 98.

⁴ According to Walter N. Schumacher, "Dominus legem dat," *RQ* 54 (1959): 1–39; 2, n. 4 the term can be traced back to an article by G. de Saint-Laurent from that year.

carries a cross over his left shoulder. He seems to be moving forward, touching the end of the scroll (receiving it?). Paul, to the right of Christ, lifts his right hand in acclamation. These elements comprise the core of the motif,⁵ and may be called its *constitutive elements*.⁶

In addition to these we may list some *secondary elements*. They may be divided into three groups: 1) In most cases Christ is depicted standing on a *mountain*,⁷ from which there flow *four rivers* (in one case he is standing on a globe). 2) Behind both Peter and Paul there is often a *palm tree*, and a *phoenix* may be found in the palm behind Paul. 3) Sometimes a *lamb* is depicted standing next to Christ; other lambs/sheep may be found elsewhere in the composition. In some cases there is a *frieze of lambs* as a separate field beneath the main scene: the Lamb of God standing on a mountain, flanked by a number of lambs (e.g. four, six, or twelve).

The exact number of occurrences of this motif is debated because there is no consensus about which variations of this scene should be included in the category *traditio legis*. In a recent article, Mikael Bøgh Rasmussen claims that there are 37 occurrences of the motif.⁸ A majority of the monuments are found in Rome or have their origin in that city—a factor which should be taken into consideration. Most occurrences, dating from the second half of the fourth and the early fifth century, are found in a funerary context (i.e. on sarcophagi); only two are found in ecclesiastical buildings (the baptistery of S. Giovanni in Naples and the mausoleum S. Costanza in Rome [fig. 1]). Many

⁵ Cf. Mikael Bøgh Rasmussen, "Traditio legis?" *Cahiers archéologiques fin de l'Antiquité et Moyen Age* 47 (1999): 5–37; 8: "Die Hauptbotschaft ist in den drei Personen und ihren verbundenen Handlungen zu finden."

⁶ There are few occurrences of this 'pure' form of the motif, but they do exist. The most important example is a silver reliquary in the archeological museum in Thessalonica (see below), and the marble reliquary of SS. Quirico and Giulitta from Ravenna (reproduced in Gertrud Schiller, *Ikongraphie der christlichen Kunst: Band 3: Die Auferstehung und Erhöhung Christi* [Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus Gerd Mohn, 1971], fig. 576), 207; cf. also *Rep.* 2.250. *Rep.* = the modern standard reference work on Christian sarcophagi: *Repertorium der christlich-antiken Sarkophage* published by Deutsches Archäologisches Institut. *Rep.* 1 was edited by F. W. Deichmann (2 vols.; Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1967); *Rep.* 2 and 3 are edited by Thilo Ulbert (Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern, 1998 and 2003).

⁷ A mountain *without* rivers is e.g. found on a gold glass in the Toledo Museum of Art, and on the following sarcophagi: *Rep.* 1.675; 2.149; 2.379; 3.642.

⁸ Bøgh Rasmussen, "Traditio legis?" 5. He does not include the later version of the motif found in Ravenna, where the law is given to Paul (see below).

scholars have argued that the prototype of the motif was found in the apse of old St. Peter,⁹ but this remains disputed.¹⁰ In fact this is one of the central issues concerning the origin of the motif. This will not, however, be dealt with in this article. Instead the focus will be on the other main issue in the scholarly debate: the *meaning* of the motif.

What sort of scene is depicted? Due to the frequent representations of biblical narratives in early Christian art, a majority of scholars have presupposed that the motif reflects a historical event narrated in the gospels. The most widespread interpretation, especially in older research, is that the motif is a representation of Peter's 'investiture'—either into his apostolate¹¹ or into his primacy (cf. Matt 16:18; John 21:17).¹² This interpretation has been questioned in more recent research,¹³ which generally tends to tone down the historical character of the motif,¹⁴ speaking about it as an allegory.¹⁵ Many scholars have stressed the *epiphanic*¹⁶ and *eschatological* character of the scene, referring to it as the divine appearance of Christ. Schumacher finds a scriptural basis in 1 Cor 15, where both Peter and Paul are listed as witnesses to the resurrection of Christ. Besides he refers to the motif as a depiction of the "coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (cf.

⁹ So e.g. Cäcilia Davis-Weyer, "Das Traditio-Legis Bild und seine Nachfolge," *Münchener Jahrbuch der Bildenden Kunst* 12 (1961): 7–45.

¹⁰ If the motif decorated the apse in one of the most central churches in Rome one should have expected that it had been copied in several churches. But there is little, if any evidence for that. Cf. J.-M. Spieser, "The Representation of Christ in the Apses of Early Christian Churches," *Gesta* 37 (1998): 63–73; 69. See also Klauser, *Frühchristliche Sarkophage*, 76.

¹¹ So Johannes Kollwitz, "Christus als Lehrer und die Gesetzesübergabe an Petrus in der konstantinischen Kunst Roms," *RQ* 44 (1936): 45–66; esp. 61–63.

¹² Cf. e.g. Eduard Stommel, *Beiträge zur Ikonographie der konstantinischen Sarkophagplastik* (Theophaneia 10; Bonn: Peter Hanstein, 1954), 130–137; Davis-Weyer, "Das Traditio-Legis Bild," esp. 29–30; P. Franke, "Traditio Legis und Petrusprimat: Eine Entgegnung auf Franz Nikolasch," *VC* 26 (1972): 263–271.

¹³ Cf. especially Schumacher, "Dominus legem dat."

¹⁴ Josef Engemann says that the scene "ist für die Entstehungsgesch. der christl. Kunst wichtig, da hier erstmals kein bibl.-«historischer» Vorgang dargestellt wurde, sondern ein aus theol. Reflexion stammendes Bild des überzeitl. Wirkens Christi. Die ausgedehnte Forschungslit. ist sehr kontrovers." *Lexikon des Mittelalters* (10 vols.; München: Artemis, 1980–99), 4:1391.

¹⁵ Cf. e.g. Josef Engemann, *Deutung und Bedeutung frühchristlicher Bildwerke* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1997), 77; Bøgh Rasmussen, "Traditio legis," 8.

¹⁶ Cf. Geir Hellemo, *Adventus Domini: Eschatological Thought in 4th-Century Apses and Catecheses* (Supplements to *VC* 5; Leiden: Brill, 1989), 71–75.

2 Pet 1:16), with links also to the *parousia*.¹⁷ The eschatological character of the motif has also been stressed by other scholars.¹⁸

In my judgment none of these interpretations are convincing. They do, however, illustrate an unsolved problem: the relation between the motif and Scripture. In one of the most recent contributions to the topic Bøgh Rasmussen writes:

Traditio legis gibt keine bekannte Stelle aus dem Neuen Testament oder aus den Apokryphen wieder, was in Verbindung mit dem Neuen Testament einleuchtend ist, denn nirgends wird von einem gleichzeitigen Zusammensein Christi, Petri und Pauli gesprochen. . . . Das Motiv ist daher allem Anschein nach bildlicher Ausdruck einer Idee, eine Allegorie, die sich in der einen oder anderen Weise auf eine oder mehrere Schriftstellen zurückverfolgen lassen muß, da die frühchristliche Kunst immer ihren Ausgangspunkt in der kanonisierten oder apokryphen Literatur hat.¹⁹

In my view the last part of the quotation is most important: Given the place Scripture had in the early church and its theology, it is almost unthinkable that this motif should be without direct links to Scripture. And that means something more than allusions to some biblical 'ideas.' As a starting point I think it is more likely that one or more specific texts form the basis of the motif. This does not, however, mean that the motif is a pictorial representation of a New Testament text per se, but rather of *a text as it was interpreted and understood in the early church*. Among other things, this implies a reading of the New Testament in combination with the Old.

A reason for the many and different interpretations seems to be that the motif consists of several elements, and that various scholars tend to emphasize different parts. From a methodological point of view two things thus have to be stressed: First, a convincing interpretation must be based on the constitutive elements of the motif, and second, it should be able to account for the remaining, secondary elements, found in the different versions of the motif. For this reason

¹⁷ Schumacher, "Dominus legem dat," 18–22; cf. M. Sotomayor, "Über die Herkunft der 'Traditio legis,'" *RQ* 56 (1961): 215–230; esp. 229–230.

¹⁸ Cf. e.g. Schiller, *Ikongraphie der christlichen Kunst: Band 3*, 207, and Franz Nikolasch, "Zur Deutung der 'Dominus-legem-dat'-Szene," *RQ* 64 (1969): 35–73 (discussed below).

¹⁹ Bøgh Rasmussen, "Traditio legis," 8. The problems connected with the scriptural basis of the motif are also discussed by Hellemo, *Adventus Domini*, 78–79.

we will start our investigation with the simplest version of the motif, i.e. Christ flanked by Peter and Paul, with no indication of a landscape—as it is found on the silver reliquary from Thessalonica (fig. 2).²⁰

2. *The Constitutive Elements of the Traditio Legis-Motif*

2.1. *Peter and Paul*

The core of the motif is Christ flanked by Paul and Peter. As already noted, this in itself is somewhat surprising—due to the simple fact that there is no record of a gathering of these three persons. According to the New Testament writings not even Peter and Paul were often together. In the apocryphal acts we do, however, find stories of Peter and Paul working together in Rome, but there is no scene that refers to the (physical) presence of Christ in that connection. The only New Testament text which focuses on Peter and Paul in juxtaposition is Gal 2:7–9 where the Jerusalem leaders recognize that Paul had been “entrusted with the gospel for the uncircumcised, just as Peter had been entrusted with the gospel for the circumcised.”²¹ This text is later reflected both in literary sources and in monuments showing Peter as head of the “church of the circumcision” and Paul as head of the “church of the gentiles.”²² In this way the two apostles are representing the whole church of believing Jews and Gentiles.²³

It is hardly accidental that the most important monuments depicting Peter and Paul together are found in Rome or connected with

²⁰ Further description and photos are found in Helmut Buschhausen, *Die spätromischen Metallschreine und frühchristlichen Reliquiare: I. Teil: Katalog* (Wiener Byzantinische Studien 9; Wien: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Kommission für Byzantinistik, Institut für Byzantinistik der Universität Wien; In Kommission bei Herman Böhlau Nachf., 1971), 234–239 and plate B 63–65.

²¹ Unless otherwise indicated, scripture quotations are from the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyright 1946 and 1952 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in USA.

²² This is the most likely interpretation of the mosaic in S. Pudenziana; cf. e.g. Engemann, *Deutung und Bedeutung*, 87. According to an old drawing executed by Ciampini the mosaic in S. Sabina originally included an image of Peter above the woman representing the “church of the circumcision” and Paul above the woman representing the “church of the gentiles.” Cf. Nikolasch, “Zur Deutung,” 61. The drawing is reproduced in Beat Brenk, *Die frühchristliche Mosaiken in S. Maria Maggiore zu Rom* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1975), fig. 10.

²³ References to relevant patristic texts are found in Nikolasch, “Zur Deutung,” 50–60. Cf. also Klauser, *Frühchristliche Sarkophage*, 76.



Fig. 1. Apse mosaic, S. Costanza, Rome. (Photo: Author)



Fig. 2. Reliquary from Thessalonica, late 4th century. (Photo from www.macedonian-heritage.gr. Used with permission from Macedonian Heritage.

Rome: In the tradition of the Roman church both Peter and Paul play a most important role. When Irenaeus relates how the apostles were sent to the ends of the earth, he claims that “Peter and Paul were preaching in Rome and founding the church” (θεμελιούντων τὴν ἐκκλησίαν) (*Haer.* 3.1.1 = Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 5.8.2; cf. *Haer.* 3.3.3.).²⁴ Similarly Tertullian praises the city of Rome, saying: “How happy is its church, on which apostles poured forth all their doctrine along with their blood! Where Peter endures a passion like his Lord’s! Where Paul wins his crown in a death like John’s [the Baptist’s]” (*Praescr.* 36.3).²⁵ In other words, Peter and Paul were in a special way the apostles to Rome, and their memory was held in honor.²⁶ Concerning the reign of Nero, Eusebius writes:

It is related that in his time Paul was beheaded in Rome itself, and that Peter likewise was crucified, and the title of ‘Peter and Paul,’ which is still given to the cemeteries there, confirms the story, no less than does a writer of the Church, named Gaius, who lived when Zephyrinus was Bishop of Rome. Gaius . . . speaks as follows of the places where the sacred relics of the Apostles in question are deposited: ‘But I can point out the trophies of the Apostles, for if you will to go to the Vatican or to the Ostian Way you will find the trophies of *those who founded this Church*’ (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 2.25.5–7; LCL).

During the reign of Constantine churches were erected at the supposed places of the apostles’ martyrdoms. Long before, however, a celebration to the memory of both Peter and Paul was inaugurated on the 29th of June. In all probability this veneration goes back to 258 and was located to the area under the present church of San Sebastiano. At that place Constantine erected the *Basilica Apostolorum* to the memory of the two apostles of Rome. Archeological findings witness to this *joint* veneration of Peter and Paul. On graffiti they

²⁴ Quotations from Eusebius’ Church History are taken from Eusebius, *The Ecclesiastical History* (2 vols.; trans. Kirsopp Lake and J. E. L. Oulton, LCL; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1926–32).

²⁵ Latin text in Tertullien, *Traité de la prescription contre les hérétiques* (SC 46; Paris: Cerf, 1957); translation from *Ante-Nicene Fathers* 3:260.

²⁶ For a recent discussion of the following, see Hans Georg Thümmel, *Die Memorien für Peter und Paulus in Rom: Die archäologischen Denkmäler und die literarische Tradition* (Arbeiten zur Kirchengeschichte 76; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1999); cf. also Lothar Wehr, *Petrus und Paulus—Kontrahenten und Partner: Die beiden Apostel im Spiegel des Neuen Testaments, der Apostolischen Väter und früher Zeugnisse ihrer Verehrung* (Neutestamentliche Abhandlungen 30; Münster: Aschendorff, 1996), 357–375.

are both invoked in hope of the apostles' intercession, e.g. "*Paule ed Petre petite pro Victore*" and "*Paule Petre pro Erate rogare*."²⁷

The Christians in Rome were proud of Peter and Paul, their own apostles and martyrs. The *Liber Pontificalis* records that pope Damasus (366–384), in the time when most monuments with the *traditio legis*-motif were created, placed a tablet on the Via Appia. The inscription documents the veneration of both apostles and their importance for the citizens of Rome: "Whoever you may be that seek the names of Peter and Paul should know that here the saints once dwelt. The East sent the disciples—that we readily admit. But on account of the merit of their blood . . . Rome has gained a superior right to claim them as her citizens."²⁸ On this background the many occurrences of the *traditio legis*-motif in funerary context makes sense: Even in death Roman Christians put their trust in the two apostles, and in the 'law' which Christ gave them.

Admittedly we find many catacomb paintings and sarcophagus reliefs focusing on Peter, in particular Peter's denial of Christ, his arrest and the miracle of the rock.²⁹ The latter reflects the existence of apocryphal stories about Peter, all connected with Rome. So undoubtedly there was a special interest in Peter, but a focus on his primacy came later than the monuments depicting the *traditio legis*, and in competition with the older idea of the *concordia* of Peter and Paul.³⁰ In the *Acts of Peter and Paul*, a writing of uncertain date, but probably reflecting forth century thinking,³¹ we see how the unanimity of the two apostles is stressed. In a letter which is said to be sent to Paul from some Roman Christians converted by Peter, we read: "But we have believed, and do believe, that as God does not

²⁷ These and other examples are found in Hans Lietzmann, *Petrus und Paulus in Rom: Liturgische und archäologische Studien* (Arbeiten zur Kirchengeschichte 1; 2nd ed.; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1927), 164–165.

²⁸ *Damasi Epigrammata*, No. 26. Text and translation found in Henry Chadwick, "St. Peter and St. Paul in Rome: The Problem of the Memoria Apostolorum ad Catacumbas," *Journal of Theological Studies* (NS) 8 (1957): 31–52. Cf. also Daniel Wm. O'Connor, *Peter in Rome: The Literary, Liturgical, and Archeological Evidence* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1969), 103ff.

²⁹ See J. M. Huskinson, *Concordia Apostolorum: Christian Propaganda at Rome in the Fourth and Fifth Centuries: A Study in Early Christian Iconography and Iconology* (BAR International Series 148; Oxford, 1982), 129–146.

³⁰ See Huskinson, *Concordia Apostolorum*, passim.

³¹ See discussion in Edgar Hennecke and Wilhelm Schneemelcher, eds., *New Testament Apocrypha* (2 vols.; rev. ed.; ET ed. R. McL. Wilson; Cambridge: James Clarke & Co., 1991–92), 2:440–442.

separate the two great lights which He has made, so He is not to part you from each other, that is, either Peter from Paul, nor Paul from Peter (οὐκ ἔχει μερίσαι ὑμᾶς ἀπ' ἀλλήλων, τοῦτ' ἔστιν οὔτε Πέτρον παρὰ Παύλου οὔτε Παῦλον παρὰ Πέτρου); but we positively believe in our Lord Jesus Christ, into whom we have been baptized, that we have become worthy also of your teaching."³²

The equality of the apostles is also reflected in early images.³³ In some Peter and Paul are depicted alone, facing each other; in others they are flanking Christ. In the latter case there is nothing which indicates that Peter is superior to Paul; in fact Paul most often has the honorary place at the right hand side of Christ.

On this background the presence of Peter and Paul in the *traditio legis*-scene has to be understood. There is nothing that indicates a marked difference between the two, or more precisely, that the motif should emphasize the role of Peter within the church. For that reason alone there is no basis for interpreting the scene as a special authorization of Peter, e.g. as a reflection of Matt 16:18. The presence of Paul makes such an interpretation almost impossible. In this scene Peter and Paul undoubtedly are depicted as representatives of the church. But that does not mean that they primarily are representatives of the great number of believers, representatives of the crowd referred to in Rev 14:3—as Nicolasch claims.³⁴ No, Peter and Paul are among the *founders* of the church. In other words: Peter and Paul are depicted as representatives of *the apostles of Christ*.

Based on the New Testament alone such an interpretation may seem somewhat strange. Paul himself clearly distinguishes between the original twelve apostles of Christ and himself; he claims to be an apostle, but he is not among the twelve (cf. 1 Cor 15:1–9). In the early church the distinction between the twelve and Paul was, however, blurred. Paul was referred to in the same way as the twelve, and Peter and Paul were often named as representatives of the apostles of Christ.³⁵ In lists of the twelve apostles Matthias—the one who

³² Text in R. A. Lipsius, ed., *Acta Apostolorum Apocrypha I* (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1959), 181; translation from *Ante-Nicene Fathers* 8:477. A similar idea is found in the *Decretum Gelasianum*, which in fact stresses the primacy of Peter, but adds that Paul too is essential for the Church of Rome (3.1–2).

³³ See Huskinson, *Concordia Apostolorum*, 52–53.

³⁴ Nicolasch, "Zur Bedeutung," 69–70.

³⁵ Cf. J. Myslivec, "Apostel," in *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie* (ed. Engelbert Kirschbaum; 8 vols.; Freiburg: Herder, 1968), 1:150–173, here 160. *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie* is below referred to as *LCI*.

replaced Judas Iscariot (cf. Acts 1:26)—is himself replaced by Paul.³⁶ The same is also seen in visual arts. In scenes which depict the twelve apostles around Christ, Paul is represented as one of them.³⁷ This can be said with relatively great security since the physiognomy of both Peter and Paul seems to be more or less fixed by the middle of the fourth century: Peter is depicted with short hair and beard; Paul is depicted bald, with a pointed beard.³⁸

That Paul in reality is dealt with as one of the twelve is clearly seen in some variants of the *traditio legis*-motif where Christ is flanked not only by Peter and Paul, but by all the twelve apostles—Paul being one of them.³⁹ The implication for the interpretation of the *traditio legis*-motif is clear: The emphasis is not on Peter, nor on Peter and Paul, but on Peter and Paul as *representatives of the twelve apostles*. This way of representing the two apostles reflects not a New Testament text (though Gal 2:7 is of some importance), but rather the conception of the apostles in the early church.

2.2. *Christ Giving the Law?*

What, then, is going on in the *traditio legis*-scene? The traditional name of the motif indicates a transmission of the law, a handing over of a scroll on which the law is written. Already in 1907, however, Theodor Birt questioned such an interpretation. In a study of the book scroll in antiquity, he claimed that the partly unfolded scroll never implied the handing over of a scroll, but rather indicated a break in the reading of it.⁴⁰ If a presentation of the scroll were meant, the scroll would be rolled and delivered by the giver's right hand. In the *traditio legis*-scene, however, Christ holds an unrolled scroll in

³⁶ Cf. *ibid.*, 1:151.

³⁷ Some examples: A fresco of Christ and the apostles in the Catacomb of Domitilla (fig. 2 in Huskinson, *Concordia Apostolorum*, 7); a frieze-sarcophagus in Museo Pio Cristiano (*Rep.* 1.30), and a columnar sarcophagus in S. Pietro in Vaticano (*Rep.* 1.678). The sarcophagi are dated from ca. 370–400.

³⁸ Cf. E. Lechner, "Paulus," in *LCI* 8:128–147, W. Braunfels, "Petrus," in *LCI* 8:158–174; and Huskinson, *Concordia Apostolorum*, 3–12.

³⁹ So e.g. the front of the famous sarcophagus in S. Ambrogio in Milan (*Rep.* 2.150), the fragmentary sarcophagus front in San Paolo fuori le mura. (*Rep.* 1.724), and a sarcophagus from Aix-en-Provence (*Rep.* 3.25).

⁴⁰ Theodor Birt, *Die Buchrolle in der Kunst: Archäologisch-antiquarische Untersuchungen zum antiken Buchwesen* (Leipzig: B. G. Teubner, 1907), 181ff, 323. Birt has been followed by e.g. Schumacher, "Dominus legem dat;" and Bøgh Rasmussen, "Traditio legis," 10.

his left hand. Peter, on Christ's left hand side, does not receive the scroll, but hinders the holy writing from touching the ground.⁴¹

Undoubtedly, Birt touched more than one problem with the traditional reading of the motif. Several scholars have interpreted the *traditio legis*-motif as a parallel to scenes where the emperor distributes money to the crowds (*largitio*)⁴² or where he delegates power to someone.⁴³ Such scenes, however, are no real parallels: In both cases the emperor is sitting, delivering the gift or document with his right hand. The same holds true in some of the later sarcophagi from Ravenna⁴⁴ depicting a real handing over of the law—to Paul:⁴⁵ in these cases Christ is sitting on a throne giving a rolled up scroll to the apostle with his right hand.

Another indication that the *traditio legis* does not mean handing over the law to Peter, is the way the lawgiving at Sinai is depicted on many monuments. In these cases we see God's (right) hand delivering a tablet or book, and Moses receiving it with uncovered hands (cf. fig. 3).⁴⁶ The iconography is markedly different from the *traditio legis*-motif. It should, however, be noted that some occurrences of Moses receiving the law are found exactly on monuments where the *traditio legis*-scene is the central motif.⁴⁷ This is hardly accidental. I would guess that there is an intended link between the two motifs, in spite of the differences. While the former depicts Moses receiving the law, the latter depicts Christ giving the law—figuratively speaking. The difference in iconography is necessary because there is no historical event which could provide the basis for depicting

⁴¹ Cf. Birt's comment on the scene: "Allen diesen Bildern ist gemeinsam, dass Christus, die Lesung unterbrechend, das entrollte Buch hochhält, um es der Welt zu zeigen, sowie dass Petrus im Laufschrift herbeieilt; er will rasch helfen, dass dem Buch nichts Übles widerfahre, dass es nicht den Staub der Erde berühre" (*Buchrolle*, 323).

⁴² Cf. the Arch of Constantine where the emperor is depicted distributing gifts of money. See André Grabar, *Christian Iconography: A Study of Its Origins* (Bollingen Series 35.10; Princeton University Press, 1968), p. 44 and fig. 116. Cf. Christa Ihm, *Die Programme der christlichen Apsismalerei vom vierten Jahrhundert bis zur Mitte des achten Jahrhunderts* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1960), 20.

⁴³ The most common example is the Missorium of Theodosius I in Madrid where the emperor is depicted as handing over a scroll of authority to an official. See Grabar, *Christian Iconography*, p. 42 and fig. 105.

⁴⁴ Cf. *Rep.* 3.379; 3.382; 3.390.

⁴⁵ On these representations, see Klauser, *Frühchristliche Sarkophage*, 83–84.

⁴⁶ So e.g. on the following sarcophagi: *Rep.* 1.39; 1.40; 1.42; 2.149; 3.465; 3.499.

⁴⁷ Cf. *Rep.* 1.675; 3.465; 3.499; and the silver reliquary from Thessalonica.

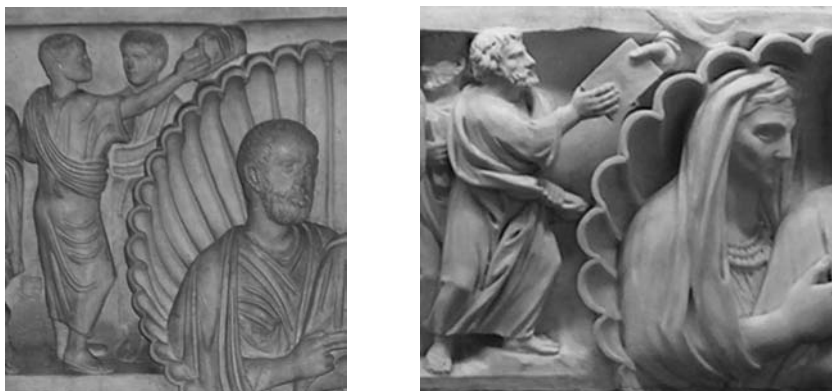


Fig. 3 a–b. Moses receives the Law. Detail of two sarcophagi in the Vatican Museums, Pio Christian Museum. Left: The Sarcophagus “of the two brothers,” about 325–350; inv. 31543 (*Rep.* 1.45). Right: Sarcophagus from early 4th century; inv. 31546 (*Rep.* 1.40). (Photos: Author)



Fig. 4. Gold glass from Museo Sacro, Vatican Library. (Drawing from Raffaele Garrucci, *Vetri ornati di figure in oro trovati nei cimiteri dei Cristiani primitivi di Roma raccolti e spiegati da R. G.* [Rome, 1858], Tab. 10,8).

Christ delivering the law to his apostle(s). We must therefore conclude by saying that the scene does not depict the handing over of the law to Peter, but rather Christ giving the law by *proclaiming* it in the presence of Peter and Paul or all the apostles.⁴⁸

This is supported by the gesture made by Christ's right hand on the casket from Thessalonica: Christ's right hand is lifted in a *gesture of speech*—recognized with the index finger and the middle finger stretched out.⁴⁹ This gesture may also be indicated in some other monuments,⁵⁰ though the most common is a *gesture indicating authority*: the whole palm is shown.⁵¹ This gesture, the lifted hand, goes back to depictions of oriental gods, and can be documented literarily e.g. about Yahweh in the Old Testament (cf. Exod 32:11; Deut 7:19; Jer 32:21). It was introduced in imperial iconography in the third century, and is found on many representations of the emperor, particularly from the time of Constantine.⁵² That this gesture is the normal one in the *traditio legis*-scenes shows that one wished to emphasize the power of Christ. Both gestures do, however, make sense and equally fit with what I will argue is the textual basis of the motif (see below).

Toning down the handing over of the law, the name *traditio legis* may be regarded as somewhat misleading. Nevertheless, it has a certain basis in the ancient monuments: In some cases there is a text written on the unrolled scroll: DOMINUS LEGEM DAT ("The Lord gives the Law").⁵³ There is no reason to think that this is a secondary

⁴⁸ Cf. Bøgh Rasmussen, "Traditio legis," 10. He rightly stresses the connection between the *traditio legis* and the iconography of Christ as teacher. Cf. also Klauser, *Frühchristliche Sarkophage*, 75.

⁴⁹ This gesture—later called the *benedictio latina*—is as follows: The three first finger (thumb, index and middle finger) are stretched out, while the two remaining are flexed against the palm. The thumb is, however, not always straight, but often touches the ring finger. Both variants are documented in classical literature as a gesture of speech. See H. P. L'Orange, *Studies on the Iconography of Cosmic Kingship in the Ancient World* (Institutt for sammenlignende kulturforskning, Serie A: Forelesninger 23; Oslo: Aschehoug, 1953), 171–178.

⁵⁰ Cf. e.g. *Rep.* 3.120.

⁵¹ On this element, see L'Orange, *Studies on the Iconography*, 139–170, and Richard Brilliant, *Gesture and Rank in Roman Art* (Memoirs of the Connecticut Academy of Arts & Sciences 14; New Haven, 1963), esp. 208–211.

⁵² Examples are found in L'Orange, *Studies on the Iconography*, passim.

⁵³ Cf. e.g. in the mosaic in the baptistery in Naples, and the gold glass in the Toledo Museum of Art, Ohio (reading DOMINUS LEGE DAT; reproduction found in Bøgh Rasmussen, "Traditio legis," 9). In S. Costanza the inscription reads DOMINUS PACEM DAT. This is most likely an error due to later restoration; cf. David J. Stanley,

addition; in all likelihood it reflects the original meaning of the image—granted that we understand ‘giving’ figuratively. We thus have to ask: What law is meant? When was it given? An answer is to be searched for in literary sources.

2.3. *The New Law of Christ*

In some first and second century Christian writings the term law is used in connection with Christ. Paul uses the phrase νόμος τοῦ Χριστοῦ in Gal 6:2 (cf. 1 Cor 9:21), while the author of Barnabas speaks about “the new law (ὁ καινὸς νόμος) of our Lord Jesus Christ” (*Barn.* 2:6). Most interesting among these writings is the *Shepherd of Hermas*, where we find the following statement about the Son of God: “And so, when he had cleansed the sins of the people, he showed them the path of life, giving them the law (δοὺς αὐτοῖς τὸν νόμον), which he received from his Father” (*Herm. Sim.* 5.6.3).⁵⁴ Hermas later identifies the law with Christ himself, saying that the “law is the Son of God who is proclaimed to the ends of the earth” (*Herm. Sim.* 8.3.2).⁵⁵

Hermas’ wording is interesting because it seems to imply that Christ’s giving of the law can be traced to a specific time and that the law was preached to the ends of the earth. This brings the time after the resurrection and the giving of the Great Commission into mind. That this is the right track seems to be supported by Justin Martyr. Discussing the Law of Moses with the Jew, Trypho, Justin claims that there is a new situation after the coming of Christ: “Another testament, a new Law, has now come out of Sion” (ἄλλη διαθήκη τὰ νῦν, καὶ ἄλλος ἐξῆλθεν ἐκ Σιών νόμος—*Dial.* 24.1).⁵⁶ Here we have a clear allusion to Isa 2:3/Mic 4:2: ἐκ Σιών ἐξελεύσεται νόμος καὶ λόγος κυρίου ἐξ Ἱερουσαλήμ—“For out of Zion shall go

“The Apse Mosaics at Santa Costanza: Observations on Restorations and Antique Mosaics,” *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Römische Abteilung* 94 (1987): 29–42.

⁵⁴ Translation from *The Apostolic Fathers* (trans. Bart Ehrman; 2 vols.; LCL; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2003).

⁵⁵ Cf. Justin, *Dial.* 43.1 where Christ is called “the eternal Law and New Testament for the whole world.”

⁵⁶ Greek text in E. Goodspeed, ed., *Die ältesten Apologeten: Texte mit kurzen Einleitungen* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1914; repr. 1984); English translation from *Writing of Saint Justin Martyr* (trans. Thomas B. Falls; FC 6; New York: Christian Heritage, 1948).

forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.” This text (Isa 2:3–4) is quoted by Justin in his *First Apology*. Then he continues: “That this prophecy, too, was verified you can readily believe, for twelve illiterate men, unskilled in the art of speaking, went out from Jerusalem into the world, and by the power of God they announced to the men of every nation that they were sent by Christ to teach everyone the word of God” (*1 Apol.* 39).

The use of the text from Isaiah 2 is not accidental. As Oskar Skarsaune has demonstrated, Isa 2:3f “is the testimony on the apostolic mission in Justin.”⁵⁷ In my opinion this statement can be expanded to include a majority of patristic writers from the second through the fifth centuries. In other words, in the early church Isa 2:3 (Mic 4:2) is the central proof-text for the apostolic mission, and the text which gives the biblical basis for referring to the gospel/the message of Christ as a (new) law. This new law may also be referred to as the new covenant. Some further examples shall be given in support of this assertion.⁵⁸

In his *Demonstration of the Apostolic Preaching*, Irenaeus asks for the prophecies concerning the preaching of the apostles, sent by the Lord to the whole world, saying:

And this was announced by the prophets in the words: How beautiful are the feet of them that bring good tidings of peace, and that bring good tidings of good things [Isa 52:7; cf. Rom 10:15]. And that these were to come from Judaea and from Jerusalem to announce to us the word of God, which is also for us the law, Isaías says thus: For the law shall come forth from Sion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem [Isa 2:3]. And David says that it was to be preached to all the earth: Their sound is gone forth into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the earth [Ps 19:4]. (*Epid.* 86).⁵⁹

Further, in a discussion of the new covenant, Irenaeus says that the Jews used the Mosaic Law until the coming of Christ:

⁵⁷ Oskar Skarsaune, *The Proof from Prophecy: A Study in Justin Martyr's Proof-Text Tradition: Text-Type, Provenance, Theological Profile* (NovTSup 56; Leiden: Brill, 1987), 160; cf. also 356ff.

⁵⁸ Some of the texts referred to have earlier been noted by Y. M.-J. Congar, “Le thème du ‘don de la Loi’ dans l’art paléochrétien,” *Nouvelle revue théologique* 94 (1962): 915–933.

⁵⁹ Translation from *St. Irenaeus: Proof of the Apostolic Preaching* (trans. Joseph P. Smith; ACW 16; London: Newman, 1952), 101.

But from the Lord's advent, the new covenant which brings back peace, and the law which gives life, has gone forth over the whole earth, as the prophets said: 'For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem; and He shall rebuke many people; and they shall break down their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks, and they shall no longer learn to fight.' [Isa. 2:3f; Mic 4:2f]. If therefore another law and word, going forth from Jerusalem, (*alia lex et verbum exiens ab Hierusalem*) brought in such a [reign of] peace among the Gentiles which received it (the word), and convinced, through them, many a nation of its folly, then [only] it appears that the prophets spoke of some other person. But if the law of liberty, that is, the word of God, preached by the apostles (*libertatis lex, hoc est verbum Dei ab Apostolis*) (who went forth from Jerusalem) throughout all the earth, caused such a change in the state of things, that these [nations] did form the swords and war-lances into ploughshares, and changed them into pruning-hooks for reaping the corn, [that is], into instruments used for peaceful purposes, and that they are now unaccustomed to fighting, but when smitten, offer also the other cheek, then the prophets have not spoken these things of any other person, but of Him who effected them. (*Haer.* 4.34.4).⁶⁰

We note how Isa 2:3–4 is used as proof-text for the apostolic preaching throughout the world, and that the eschatological outlook, even of verse 4, is said to be fulfilled. We also note that the giving of the "law of liberty" is equated with the "new covenant."

Tertullian too, is concerned about the coming of Christ in the stead of Moses. In *Against Marcion* (3.21), Tertullian discusses the promises to the gentiles, referring to various texts in Isaiah. After quoting Isa 2:2–3, about God announcing "to us his way, and we will walk in it: for out of Sion shall go forth a law, and the word of the Lord out of Jerusalem," he writes: "This way must be the gospel of the new law (*haec erit via novae legis evangelium*), and of the new words in Christ, no longer in Moses."⁶¹ In the next section (3.22) Tertullian writes about how "the work of the apostles" is predicted. He quotes Isa 52:7 and Ps 19:4, and goes on writing about "those who carry with them the law which is come forth from Sion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem," again alluding to Isa 2.

⁶⁰ Translation from *Ante-Nicene Fathers* 1:512; Latin text in Irénée de Lyon, *Contre les hérésies: mise en lumière et réfutation de la prétendue "connaissance": Livre IV* (trans. F. Sagnard; SC 100; Paris: Cerf, 1965).

⁶¹ Latin text and English translation is found in Tertullian, *Adversus Marcionem* (ed. and trans. Ernest Evans; 2 vols.; OECT; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972).

In book 4 Tertullian continues his discussion with Marcion. He admits that there are differences between the old and the new dispensation, e.g. with regard to the "rules of law," but the differences go back to one and the same God. In fact the coming of new regulations were foretold: "Long ago did Isaiah proclaim that *the law will go forth from Sion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem*—another law, he means, and another word. In fact, he says, *he shall judge among the gentiles, and shall convict many people* [Isa 2:3], meaning not of the one nation of the Jews, but of the gentiles who by the new law of the gospel and the new word of the apostles (*per novam legem evangelii et novum sermonem apostolorum*) are being judged and convicted in their own sight in respect of their ancient error . . ." (*Marc.* 4.1).

The promises of a new covenant are also a subject in Tertullian's *Against the Jews*, ch. 3. He comments on the promises found in Jer 31:31 (LXX: 38:31). In the Septuagint the text refers to a new covenant with "the house of Israel and the house of Judah," while Tertullian's text reads: "for the house of Judah and for the house of *Jacob*." In this connection Tertullian speaks about the coming of a new law, which is foretold in Isa 2:2–3 about the nations going up to "the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob" and he goes on: "—not of Esau, the former son, but of Jacob, the second; that is, of our 'people,' whose 'mount' is Christ . . ." Further: "In short, the coming procession of a new law out of this 'house of the God of Jacob' Isaiah in the ensuing words announces, saying, 'For from Zion shall go out a law, and the word of the Lord out of Jerusalem, and shall judge among the nations,'—that is, among us, who have been called out of the nations . . ." (3.7–9).⁶²

The juxtaposition of the new covenant and the new law is also frequently found in Eusebius' writings, especially in the *Demonstration of the Gospel*. In the beginning of book 1 he tries to demonstrate that the Jewish religion was not suitable for the gentiles. It was difficult for the Jews in Judea to follow the Law of Moses, and impossible for the other nations. For this reason, the Son of God appeared. After his resurrection he commanded his disciples to teach the nations what he had commanded them. Eusebius comments: "For He did not bid them to teach the laws of Moses to all nations, but whatsoever

⁶² English translation from *Ante-Nicene Fathers* 3:154; Latin text in Hermann Tränkle, *Q. S. F. Tertulliani Adversus Iudaeos: Mit Einleitung und kritischem Kommentar* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1964).

He Himself had commanded: that is to say, the content of the Gospels" (*Dem. ev.* 1.3.42).⁶³ That Christ in that way should appear as "the Lawgiver of the Gentiles" is foretold by the Old Testament prophets, e.g. in Jeremiah 31, about the new covenant. Eusebius continues:

This 'new covenant' Isaiah, another of the Hebrew prophets, calls the 'new law,' when he says: 'For out of Sion shall go forth a law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem [and he shall judge among the nations]. And all the nations (πάντα τὰ ἔθνη) shall go, and all the peoples shall be gathered together, and shall say, Let us go up to the Mount of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob' [Isa 2:3]. This law going forth from Sion, different from the law enacted in the desert by Moses on Mount Sinai, what can it be but the word of the Gospel (ὁ εὐαγγελικὸς λόγος), 'going forth from Sion' through our Saviour Jesus Christ [and his apostles], and going through all the nations (πάντα τὰ ἔθνη)? For it is plain that it was in Jerusalem and Mount Sion adjacent thereto, where our Lord and Saviour for the most part lived and taught, that the law of the new covenant began and from thence went forth and shone upon all, according to the commands which He gave his disciples when He said: 'Go ye, and make disciples of all the nations (πάντα τὰ ἔθνη), teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you' [Matt 28] (*Dem. ev.* 1.4.7–8).⁶⁴

Here it becomes explicit that the proclamation of the new law is directly connected with the great Commission. The same thought is implied when Eusebius later talks about the apostles as "ministers of the new legislation" (1.7.1).

We may also add a text from Augustine. In the *City of God* (10.32) he discusses the universal way of the deliverance of the soul. After quoting John 14:6, he writes:

This is the universal way which had been prophesied a long time before: 'And in the last days the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be prepared on the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go, and say: Come and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of

⁶³ Quotations are taken from Eusebius, *The Proof of the Gospel* (trans. W. J. Ferrar; 2 vols.; London: SPCK, 1920; reprinted by Baker Books House, Grand Rapids, 1981). Greek text is found in GCS 23.

⁶⁴ Words in brackets are not found in Ferrar's English translation; they are, however, found in the Greek text.

his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall come forth from Sion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem' [Isa 2:2–3].

This way does not belong, then, to one but to all nations; and the Law and the Word of the Lord did not remain in Sion and Jerusalem, but went forth that it might spread throughout the world. For this reason, the Mediator Himself, after His resurrection, said to His alarmed disciples: 'All things must be fulfilled that are written in the law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning me. Then he opened their minds that they might understand the Scriptures. And he said to them, Thus it is written; and thus the Christ should suffer, and should rise again from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem [Luke 24:44–47].⁶⁵

We may summarize here. In several patristic writers we find that the gospel/the message of Christ is referred to as a law or a new law. It is, moreover, specifically related to the commission given to the apostles after the resurrection. The law (of Christ) is thus the message which the apostles brought to all the nations of the world, beginning in Jerusalem. The New Testament basis for calling this message a law is scanty, but it is quite explicable when the apostolic mission is seen as a fulfillment of Isa 2/Mic 4. Because the history of Christ and the early church was interpreted in the light of the Old Testament prophecies, it was natural to depict the giving of the Great Commission as Christ giving or proclaiming the law to his apostles, alternatively to Peter and Paul as representatives of the apostles. In my view this is the basic meaning of the *traditio legis*-motif found in early Christian art.

According to the gospel narrative the giving of the Great Commission took place after the resurrection of Christ, when he could proclaim that "all authority in heaven and on earth" had been given to him (Matt 28:18). This setting makes the acclamation gesture of Paul quite appropriate. The same holds true with regard to the cross carried by Peter. In early Christian art the cross was primarily associated with the triumph and victory of Christ,⁶⁶ and this is certainly also the case in the *traditio legis*-scene.⁶⁷ The triumphal character of

⁶⁵ Latin text in CCSL 47–48; English translation taken from Saint Augustine, *The City of God: Books VIII–XVI* (trans. G. G. Walsh and G. Monahan; FC 14; Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 1952), 182–183. Cf. also *Civ.* 18.50 and *Jo. ev. tr.* 6.9 (CCSL 36:57–58).

⁶⁶ Cf. Erich Dinkler/Erika Dinkler-von Schubert, "Kreuz," in *LCI* 2:562–590.

⁶⁷ The combination of the acclamation gesture and the triumphal cross is also found e.g. on the so-called Probus sarcophagus (*Rep.* 1.678), where Christ is standing

the cross is made plain by the fact that it often is depicted as a *crux gemmata*.⁶⁸ This means that the scene has a clear emphasis on victory and triumph, a most adequate theme on sarcophagi (the most common location of the motif).

3. *The Secondary Elements of the Traditio Legis-Motif*

3.1. *Christ Standing on a Globe*

How can the above interpretation explain the other, secondary, elements found in the visual representations of the *traditio legis*-motif? Let us start with an element which seems to occur only once in this connection: Christ standing on a globe. This rare version is found in the mosaic of the baptistery of S. Giovanni in Fonte, Naples.⁶⁹ As noted above, this is one of two examples of the motif in an ecclesiastical building—the other is found in S. Costanza in Rome. Unfortunately the latter has been heavily restored, leaving the interpretation of many details uncertain. For that reason the mosaic in the baptistery in Naples is of special interest, though it is fragmentary (the major part of the figure of Paul is damaged).

The presence of a globe is clearly a heritage from Roman imperial iconography.⁷⁰ The globe is found in several versions on Roman coins, e.g. the following: The emperor is depicted receiving a globe from his predecessor,⁷¹ receiving it from a god (particularly Jupiter),

with a cross in his hand, surrounded by his apostles. The fact that *Peter* carries the cross may indicate that he was a true follower of Christ, and thus a trustworthy witness.

⁶⁸ Cf. Theodor Klauser, *Frühchristliche Sarkophage in Bild und Wort* (Beiheft zur Halbjahresschrift Antike Kunst 3; Olten: Urs Graf-Verlag, 1966), 76.

⁶⁹ Cf. Jean-Louis Maier, *Le baptistère de Naples et ses mosaïques: Étude historique et iconographique* (Paradosis 19; Éditions Universitaires Fribourg Suisse, 1964), 108ff.

⁷⁰ Cf. Beat Brenk, "The Imperial Heritage of Early Christian Art," in *Age of Spirituality: A Symposium* (ed. Kurt Weitzmann; New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1980), 39–52; esp. 45.

⁷¹ *BMCRE* 2:259 (Nos. 278ff); 3:38 (Nos. 53ff); 3:236f (Nos. 1ff). *BMCRE* is the abbreviation for one of the important reference works on Roman imperial coins: Harold Mattingly and R. A. G. Carson, *Coins of the Roman Empire in the British Museum* (6 vols.; London: British Museum. Department of Coins and Medals, 1923–62). The other main reference work is *RIC*: Harold Mattingly and Edward A. Sydenham, eds., *The Roman Imperial Coinage* (10 vols.; London: Spink, 1923–94).

standing with a foot on a globe,⁷² sitting on a globe,⁷³ holding a globe in his hand,⁷⁴ etc. The last imagery is of interest because it may be combined with the inscription *RECTOR ORBIS*, "the ruler of the earth."⁷⁵ This imagery corresponds to a statement by Ovid: "Jupiter controls the heights of heaven and the kingdoms of the tri-formed universe (*mundi regna triformis*); but the earth is under Augustus' sway (*terra sub Augusto est*). Each is both sire and ruler (*rector*)" (*Metam.* 15.858–860).⁷⁶ These examples make it clear that the globe is a symbol of power; it symbolizes the world (Greek, οἰκουμένη) over which the emperor rules.⁷⁷ Most interesting is the fact that we often find the goddess Victory standing on the globe.⁷⁸ The earliest coins of this type were minted during the reign of Augustus, celebrating his victory at Actium.⁷⁹ Later we find several examples of Victory standing on the globe that the emperor receives from e.g. Jupiter or Mars,⁸⁰ and Victory herself giving a globe to the emperor.⁸¹ Both the goddess and the globe thus served to express victory and reign, and became attributes of the emperor.

Against this background there is no doubt about the meaning of representations of Christ standing (or sitting) on a globe: He is the ruler of the world. Already in the New Testament this idea comes to expression when Christ is called "the firstborn of the dead, and

⁷² So e.g. *BMCRE* 4:40 (Nos. 260ff); 5:266 (No. 552, note).

⁷³ So e.g. on a coin from the reign of Alexander Severus (222–235) in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, reproduced in Grabar, *Christian Iconography*, fig. 104.

⁷⁴ Cf. *RIC* 3:56 (No. 247) (reproduced in Laura Breglia, *Roman Imperial Coins Coins: Their Art & Technique* [trans. P. Green; London: Thames and Hudson, 1968], 155).

⁷⁵ Cf. e.g. *BMCRE* 5:12 (Nos. 7ff); 5:16 (Nos. 28ff); *RIC* 4/1:15 (No. 3); 4/1:17 (Nos. 13 and 16); 4/2:43 (No. 192).

⁷⁶ Text and translation from Ovid, *Metamorphoses* (trans. F. J. Miller; 2 vols.; LCL; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1916), 2:424–427.

⁷⁷ Tonio Hölscher, *Victoria Romana: Archäologische Untersuchungen zur Geschichte und Wesenart der römischen Siegesgöttin von den Anfängen bis zum Ende des 3. Jhs. n. Chr.* (Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern, 1967), 41–47.

⁷⁸ See *BMCRE* 1:99 (Nos. 602–604); 1:101 (Nos. 622f); *RIC* 1:185 (No. 13); 1:186 (Nos. 23–26); cf. plate 13.210; 3:244 (Nos. 404–405); 3:245 (No. 411); cf. plate 9.182. Victory may also be depicted sitting on a globe, cf. *BMCRE* 1:73 (No. 424); *RIC* 1:103 (No. 4); cf. plate 5.77.

⁷⁹ Cf. Hölscher, *Victoria Romana*, 6–17.

⁸⁰ See the following examples from *RIC* 5/1:127 (No. 35); 5/2:120 (No. 922); 5/2:179 (Nos. 325ff); 6:400f (Nos. 3 and 6); cf. plate 7.3. Cf. also Hölscher, *Victoria Romana*, 27.

⁸¹ Cf. *RIC* 6:369 (No. 152 [Rome]); 6:401 (Nos. 7 and 10 [Ostia]); cf. plate 7.7.

the ruler of the kings of the earth" (Rev 1:5).⁸² The same idea is also found in the proposed setting of the *traditio legis*: when Christ after his resurrection proclaims to his apostles: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me" (ἐδόθη μοι πάντα ἐξουσία ἐν οὐρανῷ καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς) (Matt 28:18).

Roman imperial iconography is also detectable on sarcophagi where Christ is depicted sitting enthroned with his feet on *caelus*, the personification of the heavens, e.g. on the famous Junius Bassus sarcophagus (*Rep.* 1.680). This imagery is found on the Arch of Galerius in Thessalonica where two emperors are sitting enthroned in the same way.⁸³ In both cases the point is to represent a universal sovereign. In a sarcophagus from the Lateran Museums (Lat. 174; *Rep.* 1.677) we find this imagery in a special version of the *traditio legis*: Christ is sitting enthroned over the god of the heavens; in his left hand he holds a scroll; his right hand is raised. As usual he is flanked by Paul and Peter. This representation is unique, and is probably the result of a mixing of elements from the traditional *traditio legis*-motif and elements from the Junius Bassus sarcophagus.⁸⁴ For that reason it is less important for the iconography of the *traditio legis*-motif, which in most cases depict Christ standing on a mountain.

3.2. *Christ Standing on a Mountain*

In most versions of the *traditio legis*-motif Christ is standing on a mountain. Granted that Isa 2:3/Mic 4:2 is the basis for the motif, this is no surprise: The law is going out from (Mount) *Zion*. Besides, as noted above, the law from Zion is often shown to be identical with the new covenant. Since the old (Mosaic) covenant was linked with a mountain, Sinai/Horeb, it is quite natural to link the new covenant with another mountain, Zion.

This contrast is attested by the Church fathers.⁸⁵ Augustine, referring to Christ's resurrection, writes:

⁸² In the latter part of the statement one may suspect a certain polemic against the Roman emperor; see David E. Aune, *Revelation* (3 vols.; WBC 52A-C; Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1997–98), 1:40.

⁸³ Reproduced in Grabar, *Christian Iconography*, fig. 110.

⁸⁴ So Davis-Weyer, "Das Traditio-Legis Bild," 9.

⁸⁵ The most radical approach is found in the anonymous treatise *De duobus montibus Sina et Sion*, wrongly attributed to Cyprian. It is probably written before the middle of the third century. From the very beginning of this short treatise Isa 2:3

It was after the Resurrection, too, that the Holy Spirit was to be given in that city from which, as had been ordained, the second Law, the New Testament (*lex secunda, hoc est testamentum nouum*), was first to be proclaimed. The first Law, the Old Testament, had come out of Mount Sinai by the lips of Moses; but of the Law Christ came to give it was foretold: 'The law shall come forth from Sion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.' [Isa 2:3] This explains why Christ ordered repentance to be preached in His name among all peoples, but beginning in Jerusalem (*Civ.* 18.54).

Likewise Lactantius writes about Christ's conflict with the Law of Moses, saying:

He was doing this, not according to His own determination, but by the will of God, and according to the predictions of the prophets. For Michea announced that the New Law (*nouam legem*) would be given in this way: 'The law shall go forth out of Sion, and the word of the Lord out of Jerusalem. And he shall judge among many people and he shall vanquish and rebuke nations' [Mic 4:2–3]. For the prior law which was given through Moses was given, not on Mount Sion, but on Mount Horeb (*Inst.* 4.17).⁸⁶

Depicting Christ standing on a mountain is rather obvious also for another reason: If the 'historical' scene behind the *traditio legis*-motif is the giving of the Great Commission, it had to be placed on a mountain.⁸⁷ This is explicitly said in Matt 28:16 (though the mountain is in Galilee) and in Acts 1:6–12 where Christ's leave-taking with his disciples takes place on "the mount called Olivet." In early Christian tradition the different mountains seem to have merged.

plays an important role: The text is quoted to illustrate the contrast between the law coming from Zion and that coming from Sinai. Mount Zion is interpreted in a most special way: it is identical with the holy cross (9.5), and the new law which goes out from Zion, goes forth from the cross. This idea is developed on the basis of Ps 39:9 ("your law is within my inmost parts"). This is understood as a statement concerning Christ. When he was pierced in his side, the law came out in the blood and water—illustrating Isa 2:3 about the law going out from Zion (9.6).—An English translation and a thorough discussion of the text is found in Anni Maria Laato, *Jews and Christians in De duobus montibus Sina et Sion: An Approach to Early Latin Adversus Iudaeos Literature* (Åbo: Åbo Akademi University Press, 1998).

⁸⁶ Latin text in Lactance, *Institutiones divines: Livre IV* (trans. Pierre Monat; SC 377; Paris: Cerf, 1992), 152; English translation from Lactantius, *The Divine Institutes* (trans. M. F. McDonald; FC 49; Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 1964), 288.

⁸⁷ There may also be an association with the Sermon on the Mount, where Christ most clearly taught his apostles the content of his "new law."

The reference to Mount Zion also explains another element found in several versions of the *traditio legis*-motif: a lamb placed on the same mountain as Christ (sometimes with a cross or a Christ monogram over its head). No doubt the lamb symbolizes Christ, and the textual basis is certainly Rev 14:1: “Then I looked, and there was the Lamb, standing on Mount Zion (ἐστὸς ἐπὶ τὸ ὄρος Σιών)” (NRSV). The link between Isa 2/Mic 4 and Rev 14:1 is only the name Zion, but the combination of precisely these texts is hardly accidental. Zion is a rather infrequent word in the New Testament, and most of the occurrences (5 out of 7) are found in quotations. In fact Rev 14:1 is the only place (outside quotations) where Zion refers to the *earthly* Jerusalem (as the voice “from heaven” in 14:2 makes clear).⁸⁸ For that reason alone this text easily comes to mind in connection with Isa 2/Mic 4.

3.3. *The Four Rivers*

The mountain on which Christ is standing is normally distinguished by the four rivers flowing out from it. The four rivers are, of course, associated with the rivers going out from the Garden of Eden (Gen 2:10–14). The connection with Zion is somewhat more surprising. In the Old Testament there are, however, several texts where Eden metaphors are used of Zion. Most important are Ezek 47:1–12, Zech 14:8–11 and Joel 3:18 (MT 4:18), talking about a source going forth (יִצֵּן) from the Temple/Jerusalem (cf. Gen 2:10).⁸⁹ The physical background for the temple source is almost certainly the Gihon source and brook outside the City of David, bearing the same name as one of the rivers of Eden (cf. Gen 2:13). Of special interest is the fact that the river metaphors are also found in Isa 2:2–4/Mic 4:1–5: People are flowing towards Zion, just as the Law goes forth (יִצֵּן) from there.⁹⁰ In the Septuagint this connection it not that obvious

⁸⁸ Cf. Aune, *Revelation* (3 vols.; WBC 52A–C; Dallas: Word Books, Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997–98), 2:803. A remarkable detail in Rev 14:1 is the fact that the lamb is standing—not sitting on a throne (though Rev 22:1.3 speaks about the throne of the lamb). One may wonder if this text in fact has influenced the way Christ is depicted in the *traditio legis*-motif.

⁸⁹ See the thorough treatment by Terje Stordalen, *Echoes of Eden: Genesis 2–3 and Symbolism of the Eden Garden in Biblical Hebrew Literature* (CBET 25; Leuven: Peeters, 2000), esp. 357–372 and 409–430.

⁹⁰ Stordalen, *Echoes of Eden*, 427–428.

since Isa 2:3/Mic 4:2 utilizes the verb ἐξέρχομαι, while ἐκπορεύομαι is used in Gen 2:10 (and Ezek 47:12). The verb ἐξέρχομαι is, however, used in other texts utilizing Eden metaphors, namely Zech 14:8 and Joel 3:18. These eschatological texts speak about life-giving water flowing out from the Temple mount. According to Zech 14:8 “living waters shall flow out from Jerusalem” (ἐξελεύσεται ὕδωρ ζῶν ἐξ Ἱερουσαλήμ) on the day of the Lord, while Joel 3:18 says that “a fountain shall come forth from the house of the Lord” (πηγὴ ἐξ οἴκου κυρίου ἐξελεύσεται). Via these texts there is a clear link between Isa 2:3/Mic 4:2 and the Garden of Eden also in the Greek Bible. On this background one may claim that the presence of the four rivers in the *traditio legis*-motif in fact strengthens the theory that the motif is based on Isa 2:3/Mic 4:2.

The association between the living water flowing from Jerusalem and the law going out from that city is obviously the reason for depicting rivers flowing from the mountain: The rivers symbolize the law/teaching of Christ (cf. Sir 24:23–27 where the Law is compared with i.a. the paradise rivers). And there is a short step to the identification of the four rivers with the four canonical gospels, an image first found in Cyprian: “The Church is like Paradise (*ecclesia paradisi instar*): within her walls she encloses on the inside fruit-bearing trees. [. . .] And those trees she waters by means of four rivers—that is, by the four Gospels (*has arbores rigat quattuor fluminibus id est euangelis quattuor*); by them she generously spreads in a saving and heavenly flood the graces of baptism” (*Ep.* 73.10.3).⁹¹

Admittedly this is not the only interpretation of the paradise rivers in the early church.⁹² The most popular interpretation seems to be the one which sees the four rivers as the four cardinal virtues—going back to Philo (cf. *Leg.* 1.63; *Post.* 128).⁹³ There are, however, sufficient instances of the ‘gospel interpretation’ in patristic literature to claim that it must have been well known in Rome in the second half of the fourth century. Here are some examples: Hippolytus, in his

⁹¹ Latin text in CCSL 3C.3.2; English translation from *The Letters of St. Cyprian of Carthage: Volume IV* (trans. G. W. Clarke; ACW 47; New York: Newman, 1989). Augustine refers to this letter and its imagery in *On Baptism* 4.1.1.

⁹² On this subject, see Ernst R. Schlee, *Die Ikonographie der Paradiesesflüsse* (Leipzig: Dietrich'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1937), esp. 28–58.

⁹³ This is found e.g. by Ambrose (*Paradise* 3.14–18) and Augustine (*Civ.* 13.21). Augustine does, however, only mention this interpretation as one among many. See further below.

Commentary on Daniel, writes about the paradise river which is divided into four, and continues: "Christ, himself being the river, is preached in the whole world through the fourfold Gospel" (*Comm. Dan.* 1.17).⁹⁴ In his *Commentary on the Apocalypse* (4.4), Victorinus of Pettau (d. ca. 304) comments on the four living creatures (Rev 4:6–8), identifying them as the four gospels, saying: "Therefore these announcements, although they are four, yet are one, because it proceeded from one mouth. Even as the river in paradise, although it is one, was divided into four heads" (*sicut fluvius in paradiso de uno fonte in quattuor partes diuisus est*).⁹⁵

Around a century later, in a discussion of various interpretations of the Garden of Eden, Augustine writes that he favors an allegorical interpretation of the paradise (without excluding a historical interpretation). He writes: "This account can be even better read as an allegory of the Church, prophetic of what was to happen in the future. Thus, the Garden is the Church itself, as we can see from the Cantic of Canticles [4:12]; the four rivers are the four gospels (*quattuor autem paradisi flumina quattuor euangelia*); the fruit-bearing trees are the saints. . . ." (*Civ.* 13.21).

In addition to these texts we have a most interesting letter from Paulinus of Nola (near Naples), written in 403 or 404. He describes the mosaic decorating the apse of a church in Nola,⁹⁶ a decoration that included a presentation of Christ as a lamb: *Petram superstat ipse petra ecclesiae, De qua sonori quattuor fontes meant, Evangelistae viva Christi flumina*—"He Himself, the Rock of the Church, is standing on a rock from which four splashing fountains flow, the Evangelists, the living streams of Christ" (*Ep.* 32.10).⁹⁷ Here we have a representation of

⁹⁴ The text is only transmitted in Slavonic. A German translation is found in *Hippolytus Werke: Erster Band: Exegetische und homiletische Schriften* (ed. G. N. Bonwetsch and H. Achelis; Die griechische christliche Schriftsteller 1; Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1897), 29.

⁹⁵ Latin text in Victorin de Poetovio, *Sur l'Apocalypse* (trans. M. Dulaey; SC 423; Paris: Cerf, 1997), 68; English translation from *Ante-Nicene Fathers* 7:348. Note also that Victorinus in the fragments of his book *On the Creation of the World*, mentions "four Gospels" and "four rivers flowing in paradise" next to each other in a listing of various things that are four in number (*Ante-Nicene Fathers* 7:341).

⁹⁶ For a detailed study of this, see R. C. Goldschmidt, *Paulinus' Churches at Nola: Texts, Translations and Commentary* (Amsterdam: N.V. Noord-Hollandsche Uitgevers Maatschappij, 1940), and Josef Engemann, "Zu den Apsis-Tituli des Paulinus von Nola," *JAC* 17 (1974): 21–46.

⁹⁷ Latin text in Paulinus von Nola, *Epistulae* (trans. Matthias Skeb; 3 vols.; Fontes Christiani 25; Freiburg: Herder, 1998), 2:770; cf. CSEL 29. The English transla-

the four rivers understood as the gospels/evangelists not associated with paradise, but with Christ as the rock of the church. This is noteworthy with regard to the overall interpretation of the paradisiacal elements in the scene—to which we now turn.

3.4. *'Ecclesiological' or 'Eschatological'?*

Somewhat simplistically one may say that the *traditio legis*-motif has been interpreted in two ways: a) an 'ecclesiological' interpretation claiming that the motif is related to the foundation of the church, particularly the primacy of Peter; b) an 'eschatological' interpretation with a tendency to transfer the motif to the future and/or to heaven.⁹⁸ As a representative for the latter interpretation we may quote Franz Nikolasch who emphasizes the background of the scene, with its 'unambiguous' eschatological features: The palms ("einen deutlichen Hinweis auf die Herrlichkeit des Paradieses"), and the phoenix ("Symbol für Auferstehung und Unsterblichkeit"). Seen together with Christ standing on the mountain ("ein Detail, das eindeutig auf Texte der Apokalypse Bezug nimmt, die Christus als das auf dem Berge Sion stehende Lamm bezeichnen [Apk 14,1]"),⁹⁹ there can be no doubt about the centrality of the eschatological elements, according to Nikolasch. Thus he concludes in the following way: "Die Bildkomposition der 'Traditio legis' trägt in erster Linie, wenn nicht ausschließlich, eschatologischen Charakter. Näherhin handelt es sich um eine Darstellung des Themas aus dem 14. Kapitel der Apokalypse."¹⁰⁰ This means that Peter and Paul are representatives for the church of Jews and Gentiles, and thus representatives for the elected from all nations and peoples of the earth (cf. Rev 14:3). We may also quote Erwin Goodenough's short comment on this motif: "Christ

tion is taken from Goldschmidt, *Paulinus' Churches*, 39, slightly altered. Cf. also *Letters of St. Paulinus of Nola*, vol. 2 (trans. P. G. Walsh; ACW 36; New York: Newman, 1967).

⁹⁸ Related to the eschatological interpretation is the one advocated by Klaus Berger, "Der traditionsgeschichtliche Ursprung der 'Traditio legis,'" *VC* 27 (1973): 104–122. Berger claims that the *traditio legis*-motif should be interpreted on the background of apocalyptic vision narratives, and emphasizes the relevance of Rev 10:2ff. In light of the broad patristic material referred to above, it seems, however, quite unnecessary to claim that the teaching of Peter and Paul had its origin in 'heavenly books.'

⁹⁹ Nikolasch, "Zur Deutung," 39.

¹⁰⁰ Nikolasch, "Zur Deutung," 69.

stands on the mount from which flow four rivers—that is, the scene is in heaven, and this the palms seem to emphasize.”¹⁰¹

This interpretation, however, is not so unambiguous as it is presented. As an overall interpretation of the *traditio legis*-motif it fails to convince because it is basically founded on the secondary elements in the motif, not its constitutive elements. Besides, the explanation of several elements is questionable. We shall go into some details.

First, the palms are no unambiguous evidence for the “glory of the paradise” understood as a future and heavenly reality. It is correct that palms may be associated with paradise (cf. *Apoc. Paul.* 22; Commodian, *Inst.* 35), but the trees of paradise are not necessarily palms. Besides, the palm—especially the palm frond—was a widespread symbol in the Mediterranean world, primarily associated with victory. According to Livy the Romans imported the symbol from Greece (10.47),¹⁰² and it is attested both in Greek, Roman, early Jewish, and early Christian texts.¹⁰³ In Roman iconography the palm branch is one of the most common attributes of the goddess Victory; she may actually be referred to as the “palm goddess” (Apuleius, *Metam.* 2.4).¹⁰⁴ There are also examples of Victory depicted beside a palm tree.¹⁰⁵

Against this background the palm trees in the *traditio legis*-scene most likely symbolize the victory of Christ—as the resurrected one. The same holds true for the phoenix in one of the palms. This mythological bird was interpreted at an early date as a symbol of the resurrection (cf. *1. Clem.* 25; Tertullian, *Res.* 13). In addition it was an imperial attribute: It is often found on coins, especially from the Constantinian era, symbolizing the victory of the emperor.

¹⁰¹ Erwin R. Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period: Volume 7: Pagan Symbols in Judaism* (Bollingen Series 38; New York: Pantheon Books, 1958), 116.

¹⁰² Pliny writes: “This year [292 BC] for the first time those who had been presented with crowns because of gallant behaviour in the war wore them at the Roman games, and palms were then for the first time conferred upon the victors, in accordance with a custom borrowed from the Greeks” (LCL).

¹⁰³ Cf. e.g. Pausanias 8.48.2; Vergil, *Aeneid* 5.111; 1 Macc 13:51; Rev 7:9; Hermas, *Sim.* 8.2.1; Tertullian, *Scorp.* 12; Commodian, *Inst.* 58. See also discussion in Aune, *Revelation* 2:468–470.

¹⁰⁴ Breglia, *Roman Imperial Coins*, 78 (with reproduction of coin) and 92f; cf. e.g. *RIC* 1:165 (Nos. 298ff).

¹⁰⁵ Often Victory is attaching a shield to the palm tree; cf. e.g. *RIC* 3.220 (Nos. 88–90); 4/1:129 (No. 302A); 4/1:133 (Nos. 336–337); cf. plate 7.16.

Frequently the phoenix is depicted on the top of a globe,¹⁰⁶ or on the globe in the hand of the emperor.¹⁰⁷

Since φοῖνιξ in Greek means both “Phoenix” and “palm”¹⁰⁸ it is no surprise that the two symbols occur together; both symbolize victory. The main elements in the so-called paradisiacal landscape may thus be less eschatological than often presupposed. They are certainly linked to the resurrection, and in that sense they are eschatological, without being futuristic.

Second, the picture of Christ standing on a mountain is not primarily based on Rev 14. As I have tried to demonstrate, the basis is Christ’s commission of his apostles (taking place on a mountain), and the understanding of this event in light of Isa 2:3/Mic 4:2. In Rev 14:1 Christ standing on Zion is clearly eschatological. When depicted in the *traditio legis*-motif, however, Zion is referring to the past: The mountain on which Christ commissioned his apostles. This means that the motif is ‘ecclesiological’ (i.e. related to the church and its commission) rather than eschatological. In fact this corresponds with a tendency in patristic exegesis to understand Zion as a metaphor for the church. This is attested e.g. several times in Augustine’s commentaries on the Psalms. Commenting on Ps 132:3 he asks: *Quid est Sion? ecclesia* “What is Zion? The Church” (*en. Ps.* 132.12 [CCSL 40.1934]).¹⁰⁹ Similarly Augustine writes in one of his letters: Mount Sion is a “figure of the Church” (*Sion quia in ipso figuratur ecclesia*) (*ep.* 55.11; [CCSL 31.243]).

Third, recognizing the paradisiacal character of the motif does not necessarily mean that it is eschatological or celestial.¹¹⁰ In the early church ‘paradise’ was a most ambiguous concept. Both the concept and the text in Gen 2–3 were the objects of much discussion among patristic writers: Is paradise a place on earth or in heaven? Is it a past, present or future reality?¹¹¹ Of specific interest for our

¹⁰⁶ Cf. coins from the reign of Constans and Constantius II: *RIC* 8.154 (Nos. 231–238 [Trier]); cf. plates 2.234; 8.258 (Nos. 142A–145 [Rome]); cf. plate 9.143; 9:25 (No. 56).

¹⁰⁷ Cf. coins from the reign of Constans and Constantius II: *RIC* 8.153 (Nos. 212–217 [Trier]); 8.256 (Nos. 107–135 [Rome]).

¹⁰⁸ This is pointed out in the small book called *The Phoenix*, attributed to Lactantius. It tells the story of the phoenix, with no specific Christian interpretation.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. *en. Ps.* 75.3 (CCSL 39.1038); 77.41 (CCSL 39.1094); 99.4 (CCSL 39.1381).

¹¹⁰ Contra Schiller (*Ikographie der christlichen Kunst: Band 3*, 207) who claims that “Die Paradiessymbolik verweist die Szene in den himmlischen Bereich.”

¹¹¹ Cf. H. S. Benjamins, “Paradisiacal Life: The Story of Paradise in the Early

interpretation of the *traditio legis*-scene is the fact that the Garden of Eden/ paradise is often used as an image of the church¹¹²—as we have already seen in quotations from Cyprian (“The Church is like Paradise”; *Ep.* 73.10.3) and Augustine (“the Garden is the Church itself”; *Civ.* 13.21) above. This imagery is first attested in the second century by Irenaeus: “For the Church has been planted as a garden in the world” (*Plantata est enim Ecclesia paradisi in hoc mundo*) (*Haer.* 5.20.2; cf. 5.10.1).¹¹³ Later it is documented both in the West and the East in the third and fourth century. It is found e.g. in Tertullian (*Marc.* 2.4), Methodius (*Symp.* 9.3), and Ephraem (*Parad.* 6.7–9).¹¹⁴

Besides, as we already have seen, the most unambiguous paradisiacal element—the four rivers—was often interpreted as referring to a reality in this world: the gospels of the church. Thus there are solid arguments for claiming that the *traditio legis*-motif refers to an ecclesiological rather than an eschatological reality. This means that the interpretation of the most common secondary elements in the motif is consistent with the interpretation proposed on the basis of the constitutive elements. There is, however, one more secondary element to be dealt with.

3.5. *The Lambs and the Lamb Frieze*

In some representations of the *traditio legis*-motif a number of lambs occur as an integrated part of the scene; in other cases a frieze of

Church,” in *Paradise Interpreted: Representations of Biblical Paradise in Judaism and Christianity* (ed. Gerard P. Luttikhuisen; Themes in Biblical Narrative: Jewish and Christian Traditions vol. 2; Leiden: Brill, 1999), 153–167.

¹¹² Cf. Jean Daniélou, “Terre et Paradis chez les pères de l’Église,” *Eranos* 22 (1955): 433–472; esp. 461–467; and Jean Danielou, *From Shadows to Reality: Studies in the Biblical Typology of the Fathers* (trans. W. Hibberd; London: Burns & Oates, 1960), 22–29. In *Diogn.* 12:1 paradise is used “als Bild für die Gegenwart des Heils.” So Horacio E. Lona, *An Diognet* (Kommentar zu frühchristlichen Apologeten 8; Freiburg: Herder, 2001), 338.

¹¹³ Latin text in Irénée de Lyon, *Contre les hérésies: mise en lumière et réfutation de la prétendue “connaissance”*; *Livre V* (trans. F. Sagnard; SC 152–153; Paris: Cerf, 1969); English translation from *Ante-Nicene Fathers* 1:548.

¹¹⁴ It is also found in the anonymous Syriac book called *Cave of Treasures*. On this (and Ephraem), see Gary A. Anderson, “The Cosmic Mountain: Eden and its Early Interpreters in Syriac Christianity,” in *Genesis 1–3 in the History of Exegesis: Intrigue in the Garden* (ed. Gregory Allen Robbins; Studies in Women and Religion 27; Lewiston, N.Y.: Edwin Mellen, 1988), 187–224, esp. 205–211.

lambs seems to comprise a separate motif (e.g. on a gilded glass in the Vatican Museum [fig. 4]). Since space does not allow a thorough examination of the lamb frieze, I will restrict myself to some general remarks concerning the presence of the lambs and the lamb frieze in connection with the *traditio legis*-motif.

First, Christ may be depicted with a lamb next to him, standing on the same mountain. In this case Christ is so to speak 'duplicated' in the shape of a lamb. If Christ may be 'duplicated' within the same scene, this may also be the case with the "twelve apostles of the Lamb" (Rev 21:14). This is probably what we see in representations of the *traditio legis*-motif where a row of lambs/sheep is depicted beneath the row of apostles flanking Christ. If this is correct, the lambs/sheep symbolize the apostles. Friedrich Gerke tried to substantiate this interpretation by referring to Matt 10:16 where Christ says that the apostles are sent out like "sheep in the midst of wolves."¹¹⁵ In some cases this interpretation seems plausible, but it can hardly be used as a universal explanation of the lambs/sheep.

Second, as we have seen above, the presence of the lamb on the mountain is best explained by the association of Isa 2:3/Mic 4:2 and Rev 14:1. As soon as Revelation is brought into the picture, however, other texts also come to mind, in particular 7:14–17 where the Lamb is referred to as the shepherd of those who have come out of the great tribulation: "he will guide them to springs of living water" (cf. 14:4). Since the Lamb is the shepherd, the saved ones must be like lambs/sheep. In all likelihood the lambs/sheep in the *traditio legis*-scene thus should be interpreted as symbolizing those who believe from all nations.

Third, in some cases the lambs/sheep seem to comprise a unified motif: They are coming out from two cities,¹¹⁶ and are gathering around the Lamb of God on the mountain. These elements may be integrated in the *traditio legis*-composition or depicted as a separate motif beneath. How are they related? In a thorough article Rotraut Wisskirchen and Stefan Heid have argued that the row of lambs is

¹¹⁵ Friedrich Gerke, "Der Ursprung der Lämmerallegorien in der altchristlichen Plastik," *ZNW* 33 (1934): 160–196; 170.

¹¹⁶ It is usual to interpret the two cities as Jerusalem and Bethlehem—as they are identified on later monuments, e.g. in S. Maria Maggiore (cf. Brenk, *Die frühchristliche Mosaiken*, 46–47). It is likely that this identification is secondary, probably due to the increasing importance of these cities after Constantine.

a representation of the pilgrimage of the nations to Zion.¹¹⁷ If this is correct, the lamb frieze is closely related to our interpretation of the main motif: Both have their textual basis in Isa 2:2–3 (Mic 4:1–2):

It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised above the hills; and all the nations shall flow to it, and many peoples shall come, and say: ‘Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths.’ For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

Conclusion

We have argued that the *traditio legis*-motif is a representation of Christ commissioning his apostles to preach the gospel among the nations. The apostles are normally represented by the two princes among them—Peter and Paul (only in a few cases are all the twelve depicted). The whole scene is shaped in the light of Isa 2:3/Mic 4:2, probably the most central proof text for the apostolic mission in the early church. This means that the motif in fact depicts a historical scene narrated in the gospels (cf. Matt 28:18–20; Luke 24:44–53), though modified by two factors: an Old Testament proof text and the conception of the twelve apostles current in the early church.

The paradisiacal elements are explicable in light of the connection between the Garden of Eden and Zion already found in the Old Testament. In patristic exegesis both paradise and Zion were, however, interpreted as referring to the church, and the four rivers were interpreted as referring to the four gospels. This makes good sense in a scene depicting the institution of the apostolic mission. The same holds true with regard to the most independent element in some versions of the *traditio legis*-motif: the lambs gathering around

¹¹⁷ Rotraut Wisskirchen and Stefan Heid, “Der Prototyp des Lämmerfrises in Alt-St. Peter: Ikonographie und Ikonologie,” in *Tesserae: Festschrift für Josef Engemann* (JAC 18; Münster: Aschendorffsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1991), 138–160, esp. 149–157. After searching the patristic literature myself, I recognized that many of the texts I have referred to earlier in this article are mentioned also by Wisskirchen and Heid. The starting point for their investigation was to explain the frieze of lambs in old St. Peter. I guess that many scholars have overlooked the relevance of this article for the interpretation of the *traditio legis*-motif due to its title.

the Lamb of God, standing on mount Zion. In all probability this is a depiction of the pilgrimage of the nations towards Zion (cf. Isa 2:2-3). This means that the most complete versions of the scene depict Christ standing on mount Zion, proclaiming his law (i.e. the gospel) to his apostles, and as a result of the apostolic mission the nations are flocking towards Zion. Only to a certain extent may this motif be called eschatological. In the prophetic texts these events belonged of course to the future. For Christians in the fourth century this was a reality: The apostles had proclaimed the law of Christ/the gospel to the nations, and they had believed. Among the believers were the Christians in Rome who in the *traditio legis*-motif expressed their trust in the law of Christ and the apostles Peter and Paul who brought it to them. At the same time they proclaimed the victory and power of Christ—and the church—to their contemporaries.

EARLY CHRISTIAN ASCETIC PRACTICES AND BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION: THE WITNESSES OF GALEN AND TATIAN

James A. Kelhoffer

Elsewhere I have argued that ascetic interpretations of John the Baptist’s “locusts and wild honey” (Mark 1:6c | Matt 3:4c) abounded in the early church.¹ I did not, however, endeavor to assess whether construing John’s food (and clothing) as a model of simplicity preceded or followed analogous developments in early Christian asceticism. That is the purpose of the present inquiry. The testimonies of the physician Galen (c. 129/30–199/216 C.E.) and the Syrian Christian Tatian (fl. 165–72 C.E.) to Christian asceticism are slightly earlier than the earliest ascetic exposition of John’s food by Clement of Alexandria (c. 150–211/16 C.E.). This study will not argue for a simple *post hoc ergo propter hoc* relationship between ascetic practices and ascetic biblical interpretation. Nonetheless, the temporal proximity of Galen and Tatian to Clement suggests such a correlation, and a direct causal relationship can by no means be excluded.

A brief discussion of the two Synoptic passages will offer a context for this inquiry.²

Mark 1:6a, c
καὶ ἦν ὁ Ἰωάννης . . . ἐσθίων ἀκρίδας
καὶ μέλι ἄγριον.
And John was in the habit of eating locusts
and wild honey.

Matt 3:4c
ἡ δὲ τροφή ἦν αὐτοῦ ἀκρίδες
καὶ μέλι ἄγριον.
And his food consisted of locusts
and wild honey

In the Gospel of Mark, John’s having eaten such common desert foods from time to time serves to connect John with the “voice” of

¹ Kelhoffer, *The Diet of John the Baptist: “Locusts and Wild Honey” in Synoptic and Patristic Interpretation* (WUNT 176; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005) 134–93. In this study I follow Teresa M. Shaw’s definition of asceticism as “a way of life that requires daily discipline and intentionality in bodily behaviors” (*The Burden of the Flesh: Fasting and Sexuality in Early Christianity* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 1998] 6).

² On John’s diet in Synoptic interpretation, see further my *Diet of John the Baptist*, 121–32.

Isa 40:3 (cited in Mark 1:3a) and the famous wilderness prophet Elijah (cf. 2 Kgs 1:8, LXX; Mark 1:6b). Matthew's heightened claim that John ate *only* "locusts and wild honey" is likely informed by one or more of the exclusive claims made for the natural provisions of other Jewish wilderness dwellers in *Mart. Ascen. Isa.* 2.11 and 2 Macc 5:27 (cf. Jos., *Vita* 2 § 11). That is, since Isaiah and Judas Macabaeus (also Josephus's Bannus) had survived entirely on natural wilderness foods, Matthew wishes to affirm that John ate thus as well (so Matt 4:3c).

The important thing to note for the present study is that neither Mark nor Matthew presents John as an ascetic.³ That innovation is attested first by Clement of Alexandria and by nearly every subsequent commentator until the Protestant Reformation.⁴ Whether or not Patristic commentators thought of John's 'locusts' as actual insects or a type of vegetation, they consistently maintain that his diet offers a model worthy of emulation. A few examples will illustrate this point. In his *Paedagogus* (c. 190/92 C.E.), Clement states that John "maintained extreme self-restraint (ἐγκράτεια)" in eating "locusts and wild honey."⁵ Origen of Alexandria offers John's wish to free his soul from the passions of a body fueled by "savory dishes" as John's rationale for selecting these foods.⁶ After discussing John's food and

³ Against, e.g., Ulrich Luz, *Matthew: A Commentary* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1990–2001 [1985]) 1.168, who argues this point in the case of Matt 3:4c. Other scholars who support this interpretation include Joachim Gnllka, *Das Evangelium nach Markus* (EKKNT II/1–2; Zurich: Benziger/Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, ³1989) 1.47; Rudolf Pesch, *Das Markusevangelium I. Teil: Einleitung und Kommentar zu Kap. 1,1–8,26* (HTKNT 2.1; Freiburg: Herder, ⁴1984) 82; and Robert H. Gundry, *Matthew: A Commentary on His Handbook for a Mixed Church under Persecution* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, ²1994) 45.

⁴ Concerning John Calvin's (1509–64 C.E.) objection to interpreting the Baptist as an ascetic model, see Luz, *Matthew*, 1.168; Kelhoffer, *Diet of John the Baptist*, 187.

⁵ Clem., *Paed.* 2.1 (2.15.4–2.16.1). Greek text: Miroslav Marcovich, ed., *Clementis Alexandrini, Paedagogus* (VCSup 61; Leiden: Brill, 2002); English translation (modified): Simon P. Wood, *Christ the Educator* (FC 23; New York: Fathers of the Church, 1954).

⁶ Origen, *Luc. Hom.* 25.2 (on Luke 3:15): "But John always ate locusts, and he always ate wild honey. He was content with simple life and light food, lest his body grow fat on richer, savory dishes and be overpowered by exquisite banquets. This is the nature of our bodies; they are weighted down by excess food and, when the body is weighed down, the soul too is burdened. For the soul is spread throughout the whole body and subject to its passions. . . . So John's life was remarkable (*vita mirabilis*), and quite different than other men's way of living (*et multum ab aliorum hominum conversatione diversa*).⁷ The editions cited for Jerome's translation of Origen's *Homilies on Luke* are: Hermann-Josef Sieben, ed., *In Lucam homiliae = Homilien zum Lukasevangelium* (Fontes Christiani 4; Freiburg: Herder, 1991–92); English trans-

clothing, John Chrysostom urges following the Baptist's example: "Let us emulate him (Τοῦτον . . . ζηλώσωμεν): Getting rid of luxuries and drunkenness, let us pursue the simplified life."⁷ According to Jerome, moreover, John's food and clothing preclude a Christian widow from complaining about the "somber dress" and coarse food to which she must adhere after her husband's departure (*Ep.* 38.3 [To Marcella]). In this last case, imitating John is apparently compulsory, not an act of ascetic volition. Ascetics who did in fact choose a way of life that included emulating John's foods and wilderness habitation include Gregory Nazianzen, Basil of Caesarea, a ninth-century anchorite monk known to us only by an inscription about John's food on the wall of his cave, and Silvestros, the sixteenth-century Patriarch of Alexandria.⁸

Having analyzed these and numerous other such ascetic appropriations of John's diet, I wished to ascertain why such an unremarkable Synoptic passage concerning two rather common wilderness foods (Mark 1:6c | Matt 3:4c) would receive this type of notoriety—and so much of it—for over twelve centuries. The acclamations of simplicity and moderation in regard to food by Greco-Roman authors such as Aratus, Dio Chrysostom, Plutarch and Apollonius of Tyana⁹ support the inference that Patristic interpreters wished to derive the same type of *paideia* from scripture that had been lauded elsewhere in philosophic literature. Such a connection between philosophers' virtues and John's purported example should not come as a surprise, given Gregory Nazianzen's characterization of Elijah and John as

lation: Joseph T. Lienhard, *Homilies on Luke; Fragments on Luke* (FC 94; Washington: Catholic University of America, 1996).

⁷ Chrysostom, *Homilies on Matthew* 10.5. Greek: *PG* 57.190; English translation: mine.

⁸ Gregory Nazianzen, *Oration* 33; Basil of Caesarea, *Ep.* 42.5. As Henri Grégoire, "Les Sauterelles de Saint Jean-Baptiste: texte épigraphique d'une épître de S. Isidore de Péluse," *Byzantion* 5 (1929–30) 109–28, discusses, the inscription stems from Isidore of Pelusium (c. 360–c. 435 C.E.). The witness to Silvestros (d. 1590 C.E.) is a letter written in 1581 C.E. from Silvestros's protégé Meletios Pigas to Theodore Beza; Greek text: Fernand Aubert and Henri Meylan, eds., *Correspondance de Théodore de Bèze* (Geneva: Droz, 1960) 24.385–99. See further: Jerome, *Adv. Iovin.* 2.15; the anonymous *Life of John* which survives in Karshuni (English translation: Alphonse Mingana, "A New Life of John the Baptist," in *Woodbrooke Studies: Christian Documents in Syriac, Arabic, and Garshuni* [ed. J. Rendel Harris; Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons, 1927] 1.234–87; here, 241).

⁹ E.g., Aratus, *Phaen.* 96–136; Dio Chrys., *Or.* 6.12; Plut., *Quaest. conv.* 8.7.3 (727E); Apollonius, *VA* 1.8.

“perfect philosophers.”¹⁰ It is at this point that my earlier investigation concludes, noting that more work is needed in the areas of *paideia* and early Christian biblical interpretation and of construals of food in early Christian theology and self-definition.

I did not consider, however, the complementary explanation that early Christian ascetic practices could have offered a precedent for connecting John’s “locusts and wild honey” with *paideia*. The following testimony of the physician Galen offers support for this possibility:

Most people are unable to follow any demonstrative argument consecutively; hence they need parables, . . . just as now we see the people called Christians drawing their faith from parables [and miracles], and yet sometimes acting in the same way [as those who philosophize]. For their contempt of death [and of its sequel] is patent to us every day, and likewise their restraint in cohabitation. For they include not only men but also women who refrain from cohabiting all through their lives; and they also number individuals who, in self-discipline and self-control in matters of food and drink, and in their keen pursuit of justice, have attained a level not inferior to that of genuine philosophers.¹¹

Galen’s concomitant praise and derision, respectively, of Christian self-discipline and naïveté¹² support the inference that his remarks about Christian asceticism in the late-second century are quite credible. Even if Christians do not merit recognition as “true philosophers,”¹³ their “contempt of death,” sexual continence and moderation “in matters of food and drink” strike Galen as entirely commendable.

In addition, Galen’s testimonies accord with what is known about the vegetarianism adopted and promoted by the Syrian Christian

¹⁰ Gregory Nazianzen, *Or.* 43.29 (536B). Greek text: Jean Bernardi, ed., *Grégoire de Nazianze, Discours 42–43* (SC 384; Paris: Cerf, 1992) 190–2; English translation: Leo P. McCauley et al., *Funeral Orations by Saint Gregory Nazianzen and Saint Ambrose* (FC 22; New York: Fathers of the Church, 1953) 52–3.

¹¹ The passage is from Galen’s (lost) summary of Plato’s *Republic*. Richard Walzer, *Galen on Jews and Christians* (London: Oxford University Press, 1949) 16, dates this work by Galen to c. 180 C.E. English translation of the Arabic: Walzer, *Galen*, 15; cf. Elaine Pagels, *Beyond Belief: The Secret Gospel of Thomas* (New York: Random House, 2003) 8–9.

¹² Cf. Galen, *De pulsuum differentiis* 2.3–4: “One might more easily teach novelties to the followers of Moses and Christ than to the physicians and philosophers who cling fast to their schools.” Likewise, *De pulsuum differentiis* 2.4: “. . . in order that one should not at the very beginning, as if one had come into the school of Moses and Christ, hear talk of undemonstrated laws, and that where it is least appropriate.” English translation: Walzer, *Galen*, 14.

¹³ Cf. Walzer, *Galen*, 58.

Tatian in late-second century.¹⁴ In his *Oration to the Greeks*, Tatian likens killing animals for food to the senseless slaughter of gladiators.¹⁵ Such an equation between meat eating and homicide may ultimately be indebted to Aratus of Soloi (c. 315–before 240 B.C.E.), who stated in his popular *Phaenomena* that humanity’s devolution into both murder and meat eating occurred long ago during the Bronze Age (*Phaen.* 129–136). Tatian therefore exemplifies Galen’s generalization concerning the “self-discipline” of some second-century Christians “in matters of food and drink.”¹⁶ It is possible, moreover, that several later witnesses to the *Diatesseron* depicting John the Baptist’s foods as honey and *milk* (not locusts!) reflect Tatian’s own vegetarian emendation of Mark 1:6c | Matt 3:4c.¹⁷

Galen’s favorable comparison of Christians’ discipline with that of the “genuine philosophers” betrays his assessment that the *paideia* cultivated in Christian and philosophical circles was essentially the same.¹⁸ This claim merits additional investigation. The important point for the present inquiry is that ascetic interpretations of John the Baptist’s “locusts and wild honey” have precedents in both Greco-Roman philosophical literature and ascetic practices of second-century Christianity.

The origins of such Christian ascetic practices likewise merit additional study, especially in light of the contrasting non-ascetic portrayals of Jesus in the Synoptic gospels. For example, according to

¹⁴ Miroslav Marcovich, *Tatiani, Oratio ad Graecos* (Patristische Texte und Studien 43; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1995) 1–3, dates the *Oratio* after the death of Justin Martyr (165 C.E.) and prior to 172 C.E., when Tatian “left Rome and returned to the Orient” (3); cf. Molly Whittaker, *Oratio ad Graecos and Fragments* (OECT; Oxford: Clarendon, 1982) pp. ix–x.

¹⁵ Tatian, *Or.* 23.2: “You sacrifice animals in order to eat meat, and you buy men to produce slaughter for the human soul.” Greek text and English translation: Whittaker, *Oratio*, 46–47.

¹⁶ Robert M. Grant, “The Heresy of Tatian,” *JTS* 5 (1954): 62–8; here, 64, finds additional evidence for Tatian’s Encratism in *Oratio* 8.2 (criticizing the goddess Aphrodite, who delights in marriage) and 34.1 (a woman with thirty children is an example of much incontinence).

¹⁷ On this point see my *Diet of John the Baptist*, 141–48; in my view the surviving evidence does not allow for a definitive answer to the question whether Tatian himself or some later Syrian Christian first described John’s foods as honey and milk (not locusts).

¹⁸ Pace Frances M. Young, *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1997) 76: “Once the biblical literature became established as an alternative body of classics, it would soon be seen as the basis of a new *paideia*.”

Mark 2:18 par. John's disciples' and the Pharisees' practice of fasting contrasts with the lack of such a custom on the part of Jesus' disciples—and, presumably, of Jesus himself. Likewise, Q/Luke 7:31–35 || Matt 11:16–19 differentiates between John's eclectic habits with(out) food¹⁹ and Jesus' unsavory reputation as φάγος καὶ οἰνοπότης (“a glutton and a drunkard”). As Edmondo Lupieri notes, this difference between the Baptist and Jesus in the Synoptics may have fostered later ascetics' choice to emulate John's purported example:

The choice of John the Baptist was a very logical one: [I]n the New Testament he is the only figure who can be considered a model for ascetic life. As a chaste, fasting, total abstainer who dressed in camel-hair clothing, he—even more than Jesus!—offered a positive example to people who wanted to follow an ascetic way of life.²⁰

What indeed may have prompted certain followers of Jesus—himself no ascetic according to passages in both Mark and Q—to identify the Christian life with renunciation and simplicity in regard to food, drink and other matters? Can such practices by Christians be dated earlier than Galen and Tatian in the late-second century (cf. Col 2:16–21)? Scholars who, following the distinguished example of David E. Aune, analyze the New Testament and other early Christian literature in its Greco-Roman context are the most likely to make progress on these important questions.²¹

¹⁹ Whereas Q/Matt 11:18 (μήτε ἐσθίων μήτε πίνων) states that John ate nothing at all, Q/Luke 7:33 (μὴ ἐσθίων ἄρτον μήτε πίνων οἶνον) claims more plausibly that the Baptist's food and drink were somehow distinctive.

²⁰ Lupieri, “John the Baptist: The First Monk. A Contribution to the History of the Figure of John the Baptist in the Early Monastic World,” in *Monasticism: A Historical Overview* (Word and Spirit 6; Still River, MA: St. Bede's, 1984) 11–23; here, 16.

²¹ My thanks to Clare K. Rothschild and James V. Smith, who offered comments on an earlier version of this study.

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